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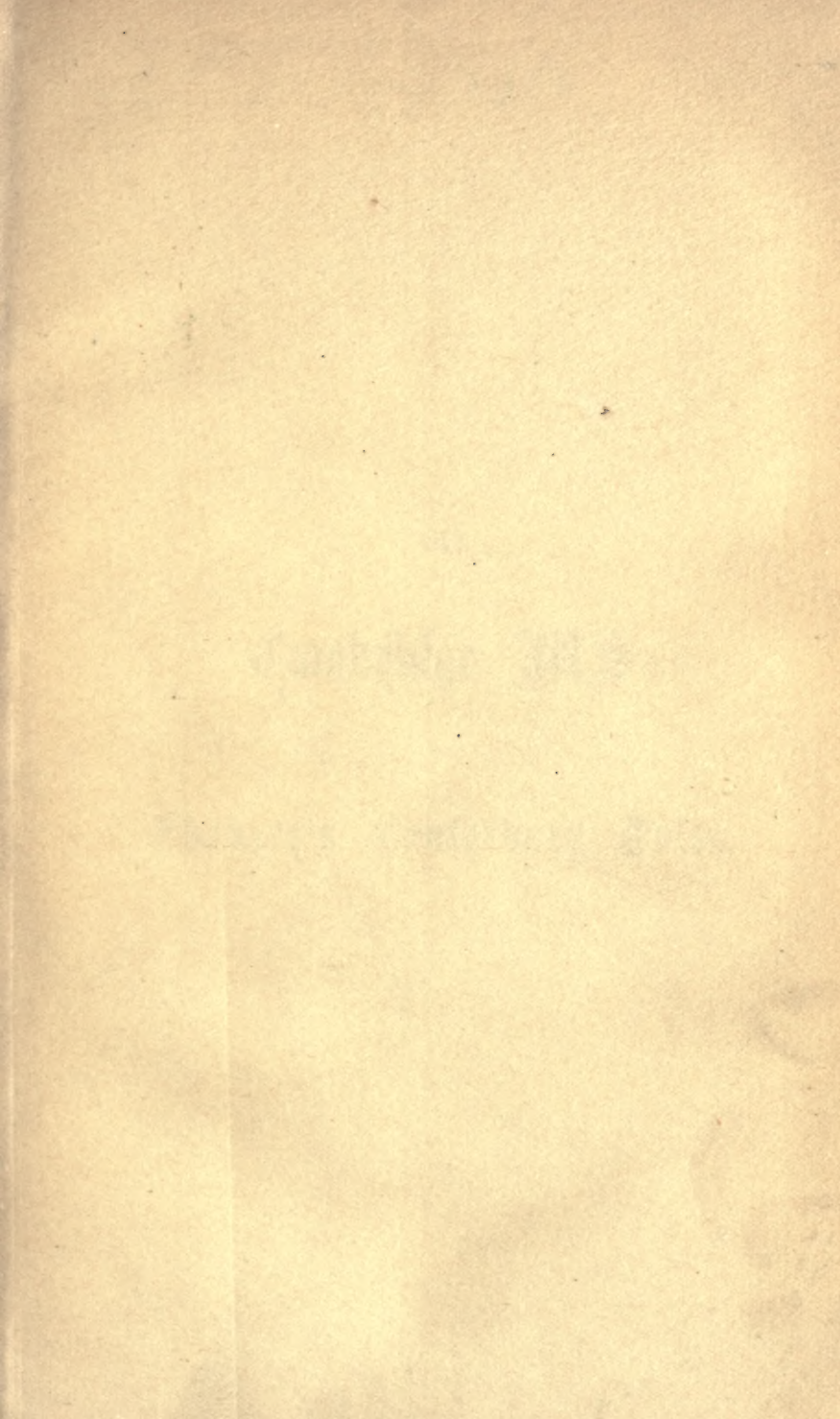


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THE

Cambridge MS

OF

Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.





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THE  
**Cambridge MS**  
(University Library, Gg. 4. 27)  
OF  
**Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.**

EDITED BY  
FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



LONDON:  
PUBLISHT FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY  
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CLAY AND TAYLOR, THE CHAUCER PRESS, BUNGAY.



# CONTENTS OF THE CAMBRIDGE MS.

Group		Six-Text Pages	Cambr. Pages
A. § 1.	General Prologue <sup>1</sup> ... ..	1	1
	<i>Teseide</i> notes for the <i>Knight's Tale</i> ... ..	25	25
§ 2.	<b>Knight's Tale</b> <sup>2</sup> (of Palamon, Arcite, and fair Emelye. Pt. II, p. 40 ; Pt. III, p. 54 ; Pt. IV, p. 71) ... ..	26	26
§ 3.	KNIGHT-MILLER LINK ... ..	89	89
§ 4.	<b>Miller's Tale</b> (of Nicholas, Absolon, & the Oxford Carpenter's Wife) ... ..	92	92
§ 5.	MILLER-REEVE LINK ... ..	111	111
§ 6.	<b>Reeve's Tale</b> (of the Trumpington Miller and Cambridge Clerks. <i>With a cut of the Reeve</i> ) ... ..	113	113
§ 7.	REEVE-COOK LINK ... ..	125	125
§ 8.	<b>Cook's Tale</b> (of the London Victual- ler's Apprentice : <i>unfinisht</i> ) <sup>3</sup> (from Sloane MS. 1685) ( <i>with</i> <i>a cut of the Cook</i> ) ... ..	127	127
<hr/>			
B. § 1.	MAN OF LAW'S HEAD-LINK ... ..	129	129
§ 2.	<b>Man of Law's</b> (Proem and) <b>Tale</b> (of Constance and her boy. Pt. II, p. 142 ; Pt. III, p. 157) ... ..	132	132
	[For the rest of Group B, see Appendix, p. 27*, and pp. 386—518 below.]		

<sup>1</sup> Has not the Friar lines 252 *b, c*, of the Hengwrt MS.

<sup>2</sup> For Appendix to Group A, the spurious *Tale of Gamelyn*, from Sloane MS. 1685, see Appendix 1, after, p. 676 *Camb.*

<sup>3</sup> In the margins of this Tale are marks showing what parts of it were taken by Chaucer from Boccaccio's *Teseide* : “:” means ‘englight from the *Teseide*’; “|” means ‘having a general likeness to it’; “!” means ‘having a slight likeness’.—See further, Dr John Koch's Essay in the Society's ‘Essays on Chaucer,’ vol. i.

Group	Six-Text Pages	Cambr. Pages
<b>D. § 1. Wife of Bath's Preamble</b> (of her 5 Husbands, &c.) ... ..	334	167
§ 2. <b>Wife of Bath's Tale</b> (of what Women most desire. <i>With a cut of the Wife</i> ) ... ..	359	192
§ 3. <b>WIFE-FRIAR LINK</b> (from Harl. 1758) ... ..	371	204
§ 4. <b>Friar's Tale</b> (of the Sum'ner being carri'd off to Hell) ... ..	372	205
§ 5. <b>FRIAR-SUM'NER LINK</b> (from Harl. 1758) ... ..	383	216
§ 6. <b>Sum'ner's Tale</b> (of the Friar being trickt) ... ..	385	218
<hr/>		
<b>E. § 1. CLERK'S HEAD-LINK</b> (from Sloane MS. 1685) ... ..	403	235
§ 2. <b>Clerk's</b> (Proem from Sloane 1685, and) <b>Tale</b> (of Grisilde, Pt. II, p. 409 <i>S-T</i> ; Pt. III, p. 417 <i>S-T</i> ; Pt. IV, p. 422 <i>S-T</i> ; Pt. V, p. 428 <i>S-T</i> ; Pt. VI, p. 433 <i>S-T</i> ; Lenuoy de Chaucer, p. 440 <i>S-T</i> )	405	237
<i>Appendix to E, § 2: ? Original, but rejected End-Link to the Clerk's Tale</i> ... ..	477	273*
§ 3. <b>CLERK-MERCHANT LINK</b> (from Cambr. Univ. MS. Dd. 4. 24)	442	274
§ 4. <b>Merchant's Tale</b> (of January and May) ... ..	443	275
§ 5. <b>MERCHANT'S END-LINK</b> (from Harl. MS. 7335) ... ..	476	308
<hr/>		
<b>F. § 1. SQUIRE'S HEAD-LINK</b> (from Harl. MS. 7335) ... ..	478	308*
§ 2. <b>Squire's Tale</b> (of the Magic Horse, &c, and the Falcon: <i>unfinisht</i> ) (Pt. II, p. 488 <i>S-T</i> ) ... ..	479	309
§ 3. <b>SQUIRE - FRANKLIN LINK</b> (from Sloane MS. 1685) ... ..	498	328
§ 4. <b>Franklin's</b> (Proem from Sloane MS. 1685, and) <b>Tale</b> <sup>1</sup> (of Dorigen, Arviragus, and Aurilius) ... ..	500	330

<sup>1</sup> The Cambr. MS. has not the lines F 1455-6, 1493-8, known only in the Ellesmere MS.

Group	Six-Text Pages	Cambr. Pages
C. § 1. Doctor's Tale (of Virginia) ...	303	356
§ 2. DOCTOR-PARDONER LINK (from Sloane MS. 1685) ...	312	365
§ 3. Pardoner's Preamble ( $\frac{1}{3}$ rd from Sloane 1685) of his Preaching and Tricks ...	314	367
§ 4. Pardoner's Tale (of the Three Riot- ers. <i>With a cut of the Pardoner</i> )	318	371
[For B, § 1, 2, see p. 129-66; for B, § 3, MAN-OF-LAW-SHIPMAN LINK, see Appendix 2, p. 27*.]		
B. § 4. Shipman's Tale (of the Monk and the Merchant's Wife) ...	168	386
§ 5. SHIPMAN-PRIORESS LINK (from Sloane MS. 1685) ...	181	399
§ 6. Prioress's (Proem and) Tale (of the little murderd Boy) ...	182	400
§ 7. Prioress-THOPAS LINK ...	190	408
§ 8. Chaucer's Tale of Sir Thopas ( <i>un- finisht</i> ) ...	191	409
§ 9. THOPAS-MELIBE LINK (from MS. Reg. 18 C ii) ...	199	417
§ 10. Chaucer's Tale of Melibe ...	201	419
§ 11. MELIBE-MONK LINK ...	253	471
§ 12. Monk's Tale <sup>1</sup> (of Men fallen from high estate. <i>With a cut of the Monk</i> ) ...	256	474
§ 13. MONK—NUN'S-PRIEST LINK (from Sloane MS. 1685) ...	281	499
§ 14. Nun's Priest's Tale (of the Cock and Fox) ...	283	501
[For B, § 15, the NUN'S PRIEST'S END- LINK, see Appendix 3, p. 29*, after, p. 676 Cambr.]		
G. § 1. Second Nun's (Proem and) Tale (of St. Cecile) ...	527	519
§ 2. SECOND NUN—CANON'S-YEOMAN'S LINK ...	547	539
§ 3. Canon's Yeoman's Preamble (of Alchemy) ...	552	544
§ 4. Canon's Yeoman's Tale (of the ras- cally Alchemist-Canon) ...	560	552

<sup>1</sup> The four 'modern instances'—Peter the Cruel of Spain, Peter of Cyprus, Barnabo Visconti of Milan, and Count Ugolino of Pisa—are wrongly put at the end of the Tale, p. 495-8 *Cambr.*, instead of after Zenobia, p. 486 *Cambr.*, p. 268 *Six-Text*.



Group		Six-Text Pages	Cambr. Pages
H. § 1.	MANCIPLE'S HEAD-LINK ...	576	567
§ 2.	Manciple's Tale (of the Crow. <i>With a cut of the Manciple</i> ) ...	580	571
<hr/>			
I. § 1.	BLANK-PARSON LINK ...	589	579
	<i>Contents of the Parson's Tale</i> ...	592	582
§ 2.	Parson's Tale (a prose treatise on Penitence. Pt. II, p. 612-678 <i>S-T</i> , p. 603-669 <i>Cambr.</i> ; Pt. III, p. 679-683 <i>S-T</i> , p. 670-4 <i>Cambr.</i> ; Leave-taking (from Harl. MS. 1758), p. 684 <i>S-T</i> , p. 675 <i>Cambr.</i> <i>With cuts of Envy &amp; Charity, Gluttony &amp; Absti- nence, Lechery &amp; Chastity</i> ) ...	593	584

### Appendix.

1.	Appendix to Group A. The Spurious <i>Tale of Gamelyn</i> , from the Sloane MS. 1685, British Museum ...	...	1*-26*
2.	The genuine <i>Man-of-Law—Shipman Link</i> , Group B, § 3, from the Sloane MS. 1685 ...	167	27*
3.	The genuine <i>Nun's-Priest's End-Link</i> , Group B, § 15, from MS. Reg. 17 D xy, Brit. Mus. ...	301	29*
4.	Drawings of the 23 <i>Tellers of the 24 Can- terbury Tales</i> , copied from the Elles- mere MS., and cut by Mr Hooper		

# GROUP A. FRAGMENT I.

## § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE

CAMBRIDGE UNIV. MS. Gg. 4. 27.

(*Its gaps are filled in from Harl. 1758 and Sloane 1685.*)

[Prologus. Libri. [Harl. 1758, leaf 1]

[<sup>h</sup> Ere begynneth the book . of tales of Caunterburye . compiled by Geffraie Chaucers . of Brytayne chef poete.

**W**han that Aprille . with his schoures swote .  
The drouȝt of Marche . hath perced to þe rote .  
And bathed euery veyne . in suche licoure .  
Of whiche vertue . engendrid ys the floure . 4  
And ȝephirus eke . with his swete breth .  
Enspired hath . in euerie holt *and* heth .  
The tendre croppes . *and* the yong sonne .  
In to the Ram . his half cours ronne . 8

And smale fowles . maken melodye .

That slepen all the nyȝt . with open eye .

So priketh hem nature . in here corages .

Than longen folk . to goȝn in pilgrymages . 12

And palmers for to seke . straunge strondes

To ferne halwes . couthe in sondry londes .

And specialy . from euerie schires ende .

Of Englonde to Caunterburye thei wende . 16

The holy blisfult martyr . for to seke .

That hem hath holpen . whan þat þei were seke .

Byfett that . in that sesoun on a daye .

In suthwerk . at the Thabard as I laye . 20

Redy to wenden . on my pilgrymage .

To Caunterbury . with full deuoute corage .

At nyȝt was come . in to þat hostelrye .

Weth nyne *and* twenty . in a companye . 24

Of sondry folk . by auenture falle .

In felschip . *and* pilgrymes were þei alle .

That towarde Cauntirbury . wolde ryde .

#### 4 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Cambridge MS.

And karf be-forn hese fadir at the table	100
¶ A ȝeman hadde he & seruautys no moo	ȝeman
At that tyme / for he leste ryde soo	
And he was clad in cote & hod of grene	
A schef of pekok / arwys bryȝte & schene	104
Vndir his belte he bar ful thryftyly	
Wel coude he dresse hese takil ȝemanly	
Hese arwis droupede nought with federys lowe	
And in his hand he bare a myghty bowe	108
A not hed hadde he / with a broun vesage	[leaf 133]
Of wode craft wel coude he al þe usage	
Vp on his arm hē bar a gay braser	
And by his side / a swerd & a bokeler	112
And on that oþer side a gay daggere	
Harneysed wel / & schrap as poynt of spere	
A Cristofere / on his brest of siluyr schene	
An horn he bar þe baudryk was of grene	116
A foster was he sothli as I gesse	
Ther was also a nuzne a prieresse	Prieresse
¶ That of here smylyng was ful simple & coy	
Here gretteste oth was but be seynt loy	120
And sche was clepid Madame Eglentyne	
fful wel sche song / þe seruyse of deuyne	
Entuned in here nose so semely	
And french sche spak ful fayre & fetysely	124
As aftyr þe schole of stratforthe at the bowe	
ffor french of parys was to here onknowe	
¶ At mete wel I-tauȝt / was sche with alle	
Sche let no morsel / from here lyppis falle	128
Ne wette here fyngyr / in here sause depe	
Wel couthe sche carye a morsel / & wel kepe	
That no drope ne fel vp on here brest	
In curteysie was set ful meche here lyst	132
Hire ouere lippe wipede sche so klene	
That in hire coppe þer was / no ferthyng sene	
Of gres / whan sche dronkyn / hadde her draught	



fful semely aftyr here mete sche raught 136  
 And sekyrly sche was of gret disport  
 And ful plesynge & amyable of port  
 And peynede here to contyrfete chere  
 Of court & to been / estatly of manere 140  
 And to ben holde dygne of reuerence  
 But for to spekyn of here concience  
 Sche was so charytable & so pitous  
 Sche wolde wepe ȝif that sche seye a mous 144  
 Kauȝt in a trappe ȝif it were ded or bledde [leaf 133, back]  
 Of smale houndis hadde sche þat sche fedde  
 With rostid flesch or mylk or wastelbred  
 But sore wepte sche ȝif on of hem were ded 148  
 Or ȝif men smot it with a ȝerde smerte  
 And al was concience & tendere herte  
 ¶ fful semely here wimpil pynched was  
 Here nose tretis here eyen greye as glas 152  
 Here mouth ful smal & þerto softe & red  
 But sekyrly / sche hadde a fayr forhed  
 It was almost a spanne brod I trowe  
 ffor hardily sche was not vndir-growe 156  
 fful fetys was here cloke as I was war  
 Of smale corl aboute here arm sche bar  
 A peyre of bedis I-gaudeit al with grene  
 And þeron heng a broche of gold so kene 160  
 On wich þere was wretyn a cround A  
 And aftyr Amor vincit omnia  
 ¶ A nothir nonne with here hadde sche canapeleyn  
 ¶ That was here chapelen & prestis thre Nonne prest  
 ¶ A monk þere was a fayr for the maystrye Monk  
 An out ridere þat louede uenerye  
 A manly man to ben an abbot able  
 fful manye a deynte hors hadde he in stable 168  
 And whan he rod men myȝte his brydil here  
 Gyngelyn in a whistelyng wynd als clere  
 And ek as loude as doth the chapel belle

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 And whan he rod men my3te his brydil here  
 Gyngelyn in a whistelyng wynd als clere  
 And ek as loude as doth the chapel belle

There as this lord was kepere of the selle	172
The reule of seynt Maur / & of seynt benyght	
Be cause that it was old & sumdel streyt	
This ilke monk let olde thynges pace	
And held aftyr the newe world the space	176
He ȝaf not of that tixt a pulled henne	
That seith þat hunterys ben not holye menne	
Ne that a monk whan he is rekeles	
Is lykened to a fysch that is watyrles	180
This is to seyne a monk out of hese cloystre	[leaf 184]
But tilke tixt held he not worth an oystere	
And I seyde his opynyoun was good	
What schulde he stodie & make hymself wood	184
Vp on a bok in cloystere alwey to poure	
Of swynkyn with hese hondis & laboure	
As Austyn bit how schal þ <sup>e</sup> world be servid	
Let Austyn han his swynk to hym reservid	188
Therefore he was a prekasour aryȝt	
Grehou[n]dis he hadde as swift as foul in flyȝt	
Of prekyng & huntynges for the hare	
Was al hese lust for no cost wolde he spare	192
I sey hese sleuys / purfilid at the hand	
With grys / & that the feyneste of a land	
And for to festene his hod vnder his schyn	
He hadde of gold I-wrouȝt a ful coryous pyn	196
A loue knot in the grettere ende þere was	
His hed was ballyd that schon as ony glas	
And ek hese face as he hadde ben enoynt	
He was a lord ful fat & in good poynt	200
Hese eyen stepe & rollynges in hese hed	
That stemyd as a furneis of a led	
Hese botis souple / his hors in gret estat	
Now serteynly he was a fayr prelat	204
He nas not pale as a forpyzned gost	
A fat swan louede he best of ony rost	
His palfray was as broun as is a berye	



A frere pere was a wantoun & a merye 208  
 ¶ A lymytour a ful solempne man frere  
 In alle the orderys foure is non that can  
 So mekil of daliauns & fayr langage  
 He hadde mad ful manye a maryage 212  
 Of 3onge women at hese owene cost  
 On to his ordere he was a noble post  
 fful wel he louyd / & famyliar was he  
 With frankeleynys / oueral in his cuntre 216  
 And with worthi women of the toun [leaf 134, back]  
 ffor he hadde power of confessioun  
 As seide hym self more than a curat  
 ffor of hese ordere he was licencyat 220  
 fful swetli herde he confessioun  
 And plesaunt was hese absolucyoun  
 He was an esi man to 3eue penaunce  
 There as he wiste to han a good petauns 224  
 Vnto pore orderis for to 3eue  
 Is<sup>1</sup> ygne that a man Is<sup>1</sup> wel I-schreue ¶ s by a later hand  
 ffor 3if he 3af he durste make auaunt  
 He wiste that a man was repentaunt 228  
 ffor manye a man so hard is of hese herte  
 He may not wepe though hym sore smerte  
 Therfore in stede of wepyng & preyeres  
 Men mote 3eue siluer to the pore freres 232  
 ¶ Hise tipet was ay farsed ful of knyuis  
 And pynnys for to 3euyn fayre wywes  
 And serteynli he hadde a merye throte  
 Wel couthe he synge & pleyen on a rote 236  
 Of 3eddyngis he bar vttyrli the prys  
 His nekke whit was as the flour de lis  
 Therto he strong was as a chaumpioun  
 He knew the tauernys wel in euery toun 240  
 And eueryche osteler & tapstere  
 Bet than a laser or a bakystere  
 ffor vn to swich a worthi man as he

8 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Cambridge MS.

Acordith not as by his faculte	244
To haue with swiche sike men a-queyntaunce	
It is not honest it may not auau[n]ce	
ffor to dele with non swich parayle	
But al with riche & selleris of vitayle	248
And oueral there profit schulde aryse	
Curteys he was & louly of seruyse	
Ther was no man now so vertyuous	
He was the beste begere in hese hous	252
[ . . . . .	
. . . . . <i>no gap in the MS.</i> ]	
ffor thow a wedewe hadde not a scho	[leaf 135]
So plesaunt was his in principio	
3it wolde he haue a ferthyng er he wente	
His purchas was wel betyr than hese rente	256
And rage he couthe as it were ryȝt a whelp	
In louedayis there couthe he mekil help	
ffor there he was not lik a cloysterer	
With a thredbare kope as is a scholer	260
But he was lik a mystir or a pope	
Of double worstede was hese semeli kope	
Tha[t] rounded as a belle / out of the presse	
Sumwhat he lipsede for hese wantounnesse	264
To make hese engelisch swete vp on his tunge	
And in hese harpynges whan that he hadde sunge	
Hese eyȝyn twynkeledyn in hese hed aryȝt	
As don the sterrys / in the frosty nyght	268
This worthi limytour / was cleped hobert	
A marchaunt was there with a forkede berd	Marchaunt
In motle an heigh on horse he sat	
Vp on his hed a flaunderich bemysch hat	272
Hese botis clospede ful fetusely	
Hese resoun he spak ful plesauntly <sup>1</sup>	[ <sup>1</sup> in a late hand]
Sounynge alwey the cres of hese wyȝnyng	
He wolde the se / were kept for ony thyng	276
Be-twixe myddil-bourgh & orewelle	

Wel couthe en eschaung schildis selle  
 This worthi man ful wel his wit be-sette  
 There wiste no man that he was in dette 280  
 So estatli was he of hese gouernaunce  
 With hese bargaynys & hese cheuysance  
 fforsothe he was a worthy man withal  
 But sothe to seyn I not how men hym cal 284  
 A clerk there was of oxsenforthe also      Clek of Oxenforthe  
 That vnto logyk hadde longe I-go  
 As lene was hese hors as is a rake  
 And he nas not / <sup>1</sup>rygh fat / I vndyrtake<sup>1</sup> [1-1 later hand] 288  
 fful thredbare was hese ouereste courtepy      [leaf 135, back]  
 [ . . . . . a line blank]  
 ffor he hadde getyn hym 3it no benefys  
 Ne was so wordely for to hauyn offys 292  
 ffor hym was lefere to haue at hese bedis hed  
 Twenty bokis I-clad in blak or red  
 Of Aristotle & his philoso-phie  
 þan robis ryche or fedele or gay sautrie 296  
 But al be þat he was a philisofre  
 þat hadde but lityl gold in cofre  
 But al þat he myȝte of hese frendis hente  
 On bokis & on lernynge he it spente 300  
 And besily gan for þe soulȝs preye  
 Of hem þat ȝaf hym wherwith to schole heye  
 Of stodie tok he most kep & most hede  
 Not a word spak he more þan was nede 304  
 And þat was seyð in forme & reuerence  
 And schort & quik & ful of hey sentence  
 Sounynge in moral uertu was hese speche  
 And gladly wolde he lerne & gladli te-che 308  
 A seriaunt of the lawe bothe war & wys      Seregeaunt  
 That oftyn hadde ben at þ<sup>e</sup> paruys  
 He was also ryche of excellençe  
 Discret he was & of gret reuerence 312  
 He semede swich hese wordis were so wyse

10 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Cambridge MS.

Iustyse he was ful oftyn in asyse  
 Be patent & be pleyn commyssioun  
 ffor hese sience & for hese heye renoun 316  
 Of feis & robis hadde he manyon  
 So gret a purchasour was neuere non  
 Al was fesymple to hym in effect  
 His purchase myzte not ben enfect 320  
 Neuere so besy a man as he þere nas  
 And þat he semede besiere þan he was  
 In termys hadde he cas & domys alle  
 þat from the tyme of kyng welyam were falle 324  
 Therto he coude endite & make a thyng [leaf 186]  
 Ther coude no man pynche at hese writyng  
 And every statut coude he pleyn be rote  
 He rod but homely in a medely cote 328  
 Gyrt with a seynt of silk with barrys smale  
 Of hese aray telle I no lengere tale  
 A frankeleyn was in hese cumpanye ffrankeleyn  
 Whit was hese berd as is þe daysie 332  
 Of complexioun he was sanguyn  
 Wel louede be þ<sup>e</sup> morwe a soppe in wyn  
 To leuyn in delit was euere hese wone  
 ffor he was epicurus owene sone 336  
 Tha<sup>t</sup> held opynyoun þat pleyn delyt [1 t in later hand]  
 Was uery felicite parfyt  
 An housholdere & þat a gret was he  
 Seynt Ielion he was in that cuntre 340  
 Hese bred hese ale was alwey aftyr on  
 A betere enuynede man was nower non  
 With-oute bake mete was neuere his hous  
 Of fysch & flesch & þat so plentiuous 344  
 It snowede in his mouth of mete<sup>2</sup> & drynk [2 te in late hand]  
 Of alle deynteis that<sup>3</sup> men coude þynk [3 t altered to at by a later hand]  
 Aftyr þ<sup>e</sup> sundery sesenys of the 3er  
 So chaungede he hese mete & hese soper 348  
 fful manye a fat perterych hadde he in mewe



And many a brem / & manye a luce in stewe  
 Wo was hese cook / but 3if hese sauce were  
 Poynaunt & redy al hese geere 352  
 His table dormaunt in hese halle alwey  
 Stod redy keuered / al the longe day  
 At sessiounnys pere was he lord & syre  
 fful ofte tyme he was kn[i]ght of the schyre 356  
 An Anlas & a gipser al of sylk  
 Heng at hese gyrdil whit as morwyn mylk  
 A schirreue hadde he ben & countour  
 Was<sup>1</sup> nower swich a vanasour [1 as in a later hand] 360  
 An habirdaschere & a carpenter [leaf 136, back]  
 A webber a dyere & a taphiser  
 And pey were clothid alle in on lyuere  
 Of a ful solempne & a gret fraternyte 364  
 ffrorsch & newe here ger apikede was  
 Here knyues were chapid not with bras  
 But al with sylvir wrouzt ful clene & wel  
 Here gredelys & here pouchis euerydel 368  
 Wel semede eche of hem a fayr burgeys  
 To sittyn In a 3ilde halle on a deys  
 Euerych for the wisdam that he can  
 Was schaply for to ben an aldirman 372  
 ffor catel hade pey I-now & rente  
 And ek here wyuys wolde it wel assente  
 And ellis serteyn weryn pey to blame  
 It is ful fayr to be clepid madame 376  
 And gon to vigilis al be-fore  
 And han a mental ryalliche I-bore  
 A cok hadde pey with hem for pe nonys A Cook  
 To boile the chekenys & the marye bonys 380  
 And poudir Marchaunt tard & galyngale  
 Wel coude he knowe a drauht of londen ale  
 He couth roste & sethe & boyle & frye  
 Makyn mortereus & wel bake a pye 384  
 But gret harm was it as it semede me

12 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Cambridge MS.

That on hese schene a mormal hadde he  
 ffor blankmanger þat made he at the beste  
 A schipman was þere wonynge fer be weste a Shipman  
 ffor ouȝt I wot he was of dertemouthe 389  
 He rod up on a rouncey as he couthe  
 In a gownne of faldynge to the kne  
 A daggere hangynge on a lace hadde he 392  
 Aboute his nekke vnder his arm adoun  
 The hote somyr hadde mad his hew al broun  
 And serteynli he was a good felawe  
 fful manye a drauȝt of weyn hadde he I-drawe 396  
 ffrom burdeux ward whil that the chapman slep [leaf 137]  
 Of nyce consience tok he none kep  
 Ȝif that he fauȝt & hadde the heyere hand  
 Be watyr he sente hem hom by euery land 400  
 But of hese craft to rekene wel hese tydis  
 Hese stremys & hese daungerys hym besyde  
 His herberwe & hese mone his<sup>1</sup> lodmyngage [<sup>1</sup> is in a later hand]  
 There nas non swich from hul to cartage 404  
 Hardy he was & wys to vndirtake  
 With manye a tempest hadde his berd ben schake  
 He knew alle þe hauenys as þey were  
 ffrom gotlond to the kape of fenystere 408  
 And euery Cryk in bretayne & in spayne  
 His barge clepid was de maudelayne  
 With vs þere was a doctour of phisik Doctor de physik  
 In al þis world was ther non hym lik 412  
 To speke of phisik & of surgerye  
 ffor he was groundit in astronomye  
 Hepte hese pacient a ful gret del  
 In houres by his Magik naturel 416  
 Wel couthe he fortwnen the ascendent  
 Of hese ymagis / for hese pacient  
 He knew the cause of euery maladye  
 Were it hot or cold or moyst or dreye 420  
 And where þey engendere & of what humour

He was a veray parfyt praktysour  
 The cause I-knowe & of hese harm the rote  
 Anon he ȝaf the seke man hese bote 424  
 fful redy hadde he sese apotecaryis  
 To syndyn hym hese droggis & hese letewaryis  
 ffor eche of hem made opere for to wynne  
 Here frenschepe was not newe to begynne 428  
 Wel knew he the olde exculapijs  
 And diascorides & ek Rufijs  
 Olde ypocras lylve & galien  
 Serapion Razis & Auycen 432  
 Auerois damascyen & constantyn [leaf 137, back]  
 Bernard & Gadesleun & gilbertyn  
 Of hese diete mesurable was he  
 ffor it was of non superfluyte 436  
 But of gret nuryschyng & digestible  
 His stody was wol lytyl in the bible  
 In sangwyn & in pers he clad was al  
 lynede with taffata & sendal 440  
 And ȝit he was but esy of dispence  
 He kepte that he wan in pestelence  
 ffor gold in phisik is a cardial  
 Therfore he louede gold in special 444  
 A good wif was there of beside bathe A wyf of bathe  
 But sche was sumdel def & þat was skathe  
 Of cloth makynge sche hade swich an hand  
 Sche passed hem of ypres & of gaunt 448  
 In al the parich wif was there non  
 That to the offerynge to fore her' schulde gon  
 And ȝif þere dede serteyn so wroth was sche  
 That sche was out of alle charite 452  
 Here couercheis ful fyne were of ground  
 I durste swere þey weyedyn a pound  
 That on a sunday weryn vp on here hed  
 Here hosyn weryn of fyn skarlet red 456  
 fful streyte I-teyede & schois ful moyste & newe

14 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Cambridge MS.

Bold was here face & fayr & red of hewe  
 Sche was a worthi woman al here lyue  
 Husbandis at cherche dore sche hadde fyue 460  
 With-outyn opere compayne in ȝouthē  
 But þerof nedith not to speke as nouthe  
 And thryes hadde sche ben at Ierusalem  
 Sche hadde passed manye a strong strem 464  
 At rome she hadde ben & at boloyne  
 In galis at seynt Iame & at coloyne  
 Sche couthe meche of wonderyng be þ<sup>e</sup> weye  
 Gat-toþed was sche sothly for to seye 468  
 Vp-on an aumbelere ful esily sche sat [leaf 138]  
 I-wympeled wel & on here hed an hat  
 As brod as is a bokeler or a targe  
 A fot-mental a-boute here hepis large 472  
 And on here fet a peyre of sporys scharpe  
 In felauschepe wel coude sche lawe & carpe  
 Of remedijs of loue / sche knew per schauce  
 ffor sche coude of that art / the olde daunse 476  
 A good man was there of religioun a Persoun  
 And was a pore persoun of a toun  
 But riche he was of holy thouȝt & werk  
 He was also a lerned man a clerk 480  
 That cristis gospel trewely wolde teche  
 Hese parischiens deuoutly wolde he teche  
 Benyngne he was & wondyr delygent  
 And in aduersite ful pacient 484  
 And swich he was preuyd ofte sythis  
 fful loth were hym to cursyn for hese tythis  
 But rathere wolde he ȝeuyn out of doute  
 Vnto hese pore parschens aboute 488  
 Of hese offeryng & hese substau[n]ce  
 He couthe in lityl thyng han suffisiaunce  
 Wyd was hese parysch & housys fer asundir  
 But he ne lyfte not for reyn ne thondir 492  
 In seknesse nor in myschif to visite



The fertheste in hese parich meche & lite  
 Vp on hese fet & in hese hond a staf  
 This noble ensaumple to hese schep he 3af 496  
 That fyrst he wrouzte & aftyrward he tauzte  
 Out of the gospel he to wordis cauzte  
 And this figure he addede *perto*  
 That 3if gold rustede what schal yryn do 500  
 That 3if a pryst be foul on whom we truste  
 No wondyr ist <sup>1</sup> lewede men to ruste [1 MS. altered]  
 And schame it is 3if a pryst take kep  
 A schetyn schepperde & a clene schep 504  
 Wel outhe a prest ensaumple for to 3eue [leaf 138, back]  
 By hese clennesses how hese schep schulde leue  
 He sette not hese benefys to hyre  
 An let hese schep<sup>2</sup> acumbrit in the myre [2 p in a later hand]  
 And ran to lundene vn to seynt poulys 509  
 To seke hym a chauntriye for soulys  
 Or with a broperhed to be with holde  
 But dwelte at hom & kepte wel hese folde 512  
 So that þe wolf ne made it not myscarie  
 He was a schepherde & not a mersenarye  
 And þow he holy were & vertuous  
 He was not to synful men dispitous 516  
 Ne of hese speche daungerous ne digne  
 But in hese techynge<sup>3</sup> discreet & benygne<sup>3</sup> [3-3 in a later hand]  
 To drawyn folk to heuyn be clennesses  
 Be good ensaumple this was hese besynesse 520  
 But 3if it were ony persone obstynat  
 What<sup>4</sup>so he were of hey or low estat [4 t in a later hand]  
 Hym wolde he snybbyn scharpli for the nonys  
 A bettyr pryst I trowe neuere non is 524  
 He waytid aftyr no pompe ne reuerence  
 Ne makid [him<sup>5</sup>] a spisede concience [5 in a later hand]  
 But cristis lore & hese apostill twelue  
 He taughte but fyrst he folwede it hym selue 528  
 With hym þere was a plowman that was hese broper

That hadde led of donge manye a fudir  
 A trewe swynkere & a good was he  
 leuyng in pes & parfit charite 532  
 God louede he best with al hese hole herte  
 At alle tymys thow hym gamenede or smerte  
 And thanne his nyȝhe-bour riȝt as hym selue  
 He wolde throsche & þerto dyke & delue 536  
 ffor cristis sake for / eue[r<sup>1</sup>]y pore wyght [1 r in a later hand]  
 With-outyn hyre / ȝif it leye in his myȝt  
 Hese tythis payede he ful fayre & wel  
 Bothe of [his] propre swynk & his catel 540  
 In a tabbard he rod vp on a mere [leaf 130]  
 There was also a reue & a mellere ¶ a Reve. a. Mellere.  
 A somnour & a pardounner also a Sunour.  
 A maunsiple & myn self there were no mo a Pardonnere.  
 The meller was a strong carl for the nonys ¶ a Maunciple  
 ful big he was of braun & ek of bonys Chaucer  
 That preuyd he wel for ouyr al þere he cam  
 At wrastelynge he wolde haue alwey the ram 548  
 He was schort schulderid brod & thikke knarre  
 Ther nas no dore that he wolde heue of harre  
 Oor breke it at a rennyng with hese hed  
 His berd as ony sowe or fox was red 552  
 And þerto brod as þow it were a spade  
 Vp on the cop ryȝt of hese nose he hade  
 A wrete & theron stod a tust of herys  
 Red as the brostelis of a sowys erys 556  
 Hese nosetherlis blake were & wide  
 A swerd & a bokeier bar he bi hese syde  
 His mouth as a<sup>1</sup> gret furneys [1 a in a later hand]  
 He was a ganglere & a galiardeys 560  
 And that was most of synne & harlotrye  
 Wel coude he stele corn & tolle twye  
 And that he hadde a tabbard<sup>2</sup> of good parte<sup>2</sup> [2-3 in a later hand]  
 A whit cote & a blew hod werede he 564  
 A bagge pipe wel couthe he blowe & sounne

And *per*withal he brouzte / vs out of tounne  
 A gentyl maunciple was *pere* of a temple A Maunciple  
 Of whiche acatouris myȝte take exsaumple 568  
 ffor to ben wys in beyinge of uytayle  
 ffor where that he payede or tok be tayle  
 Algate he waytide so in hese acate  
 That he was ay be-forin & in good state 572  
 Now is not that of god / a ful fayr grace  
 That swich a lewede manys wit schal pace  
 The wisdam of an hep / of lernede men  
 Of maystrys<sup>1</sup> hadde he mo *pan* thryis<sup>1</sup> ten [1 s. hr: later] 576  
 That were of lawe expert & corious [leaf 139, back]  
 Of whiche *pere* were a doseyn in that hous  
 Worthi to ben styward of <sup>2</sup>rente & lond<sup>2</sup> [2 s later]  
 Of ony lord that is in yngelond<sup>2</sup> 580  
 To make hym lyue / by his owene good  
 In honour detteles but he werere wod  
 Or leue as skarsely as hym liste desire  
 And able for to helpyn al a schyre 584  
 In ony cas that myȝte falle or happe  
 And ȝit this maunsiple / sette here allerys cappe  
 The reue was a sclendere colerik man A Reve  
 Hese berd was schaue as nygh as euere he can 588  
 His her was by hese erys ful rou[n]de I-schorn  
 His top was dokkyd as a pryst be-forin  
 fful longe were hese leggis & ful lene  
 y-lik a staf ther was no calf I-sene 592  
 Wel couthe he kepe a gerner & a bynne  
 There [was] non auditour couthe on hym wyne  
 Wel wiste he be *pe* droute & be the reyn  
 The ȝildynge of hese sed & of hese greyn 596  
 His lordis schep hese net hese deyerye  
 Hese swyn hese hors hese stoor & his pultrie  
 Was holly in *pis* revis gouernynge  
 And be *pe* couenaunt ȝaf the rekenynge 600  
 Syn *pat* his lord was twenty ȝer of age

18 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Cambridge MS.

The[r] coude no man bryngyn hym in a-rerage  
 Ther nas bayle herde ne oper hyne  
 That he knew his sleythe & conyng 604  
 The were adred of hym as of the dep  
 Hese wonyng was ful fayre / vp on an heth  
 With grene treis I-schadewid was hese place  
 He couthe betere þan hese lord purchase 608  
 fful riche he was a-storid preuily  
 Hese lord. wel couthe he plese subtyly  
 To ȝeue & lene hym of hese owene good  
 And haue a thank & ȝit a cote and <sup>1</sup> hood <sup>1</sup>. [1-1 nd, hood: later]  
 In ȝouth he hadde lernyd a good mystir [leaf 140] 613  
 He was a wol good wryȝte a carpenter  
 This reue sat vp on a ful good stot  
 That was a pomeli grey & hyȝte skot 616  
 A long surcote of pers vp on he hadde  
 And bi hese syde he bar a rusty blade  
 Of norfolke was þis reue of whiche I telle  
 Be syde a toun men clepe baldiswelle 620  
 Tukkede he was as is a frere aboute  
 And euere he rod þ<sup>e</sup> hemereste of oure route  
 A somnour was þere with vs in that plase A Somenour  
 That hadde a fer red cherubynys face 624  
 ffor sausefleme he was with eyen narwe  
 As hot he was & lecherous as a sparwe  
 With skalede browys blake & pilid berd  
 Of hese vesage chylderyn weryn a-ferid 628  
 Ther nas quyk siluyr litarge ne bronston  
 Boras seruse ne oyle of tartre non  
 Ne oynement þat wolde clense & byte  
 That hym myȝte helpyn of hese whelkys white 632  
 Ne of the knobbis sittynge on hese scheke  
 Wel louede he garlek onyounys & ek lekys  
 And for to drynkyn strong wyn red as blod  
 Thanne wolde he speke & crye as he were wod 636  
 And whan he wel dronkyn hadde þe wyn



Thanne wolde he speke no word but latyn  
 A fewe termys hadde he to or thre  
 That he hadde lernyd out of sum decre 640  
 No wondir he herde it al the day  
 And ek ȝe knowe wel that a Iay  
 Kan clepe watte as wel as can the pope  
 But who so couthe in opere þyngis hym grope 644  
 Thanne hadde he spent al hese philosophie  
 Ay questio quod Iurys wolde he crye  
 He was a gentil harlot & a kynde  
 A betere felawe schulde men not fynnde 648  
 He wolde suffere for a quart of wyn [leaf 140, back]  
 A good felawe to haue hese concubyn  
 A twelmonyth & excusyn hym at the fulle  
 fful pryuyly a fynce ek couthe he pulle 652  
 And ȝif he fond ower a good felawe  
 He wolde techyn hym to haue non awe  
 In swich cas of the erchedekenys curs  
 But ȝif a manys soule were in hese pors 656  
 ffor in hese purs he schulde ponynschid be  
 Purs is the erchedekynys helle seyde he  
 But wel I wot he lyep ryȝt in dede  
 Of cursyng owyth eche gilty man drede 660  
 ffor curs wele sle ryȝt as asoylyng sauyth  
 And also war hym of a sygnyfcauyth  
 In daunger hadde he at hese owene gyse  
 The ȝonge gerlys of the diosyse 664  
 And knew here conseyll & was al here red  
 A garlond hade he set vp on hese hed  
 As gret as it were for an ale stake  
 A bokeler hadde he mad hym of a cake 668  
 With hym there rod a Ioly pardounner A Pardounner  
 Of rounceyuale his frend & his cumper  
 That streyt was comyn from the court of rome  
 fful loude he song loue come hedir come 672  
 This somnour bar to hym a stif bordoun

Was neuere triompe half of so gret a soun  
 This pardounner hade her as jelw as ony wax  
 But smothe it heng as dop a strik of flex 676  
 Be ouncis heng hese lokkys þat he hadde  
 And þerwith he hese schulderys ouerspradde  
 But thenne it lay be culpounnys on & on  
 And hod for Iolite werede he non 680  
 ffor it was trussed vp in hese walet  
 Hym thouȝte he rod al of the newe iet  
 Discheuele saf his cappe he rod al bare  
 Sweche glarynge. eyen. hadde. he as an hare 684  
 A vernykele hadde he sowyd vp on hese cappe [leaf 141]  
 Hese walet be-foryn hym in hese lappe  
 Bret ful of pardoun come from rome hot  
 A noys he hath as smal as haþ a got 688  
 No berd hadde he ne neuere schulde haue  
 As smothe it was / as it were late schauē  
 I trowe he were a geldyns or a mare  
 But of hese craft from berewik in to ware 692  
 Ne was swich a noþer pardounnere  
 ffor in his male he hadde a pilwe bere  
 Wich þat he seyde was oure lady ueyl  
 He seyde he hadde a gobet of þe seyl 696  
 That seynt petyr hadde whan þat he wente  
 Vp on þe se tyl that god<sup>1</sup> hym hente [1 that god: later]  
 He hadde a cros / of latoun. ful of stonys  
 And in a glas he hadde piggis bonys 700  
 But with þese relikys whan þat he fond<sup>2</sup>. [2 d: later]  
 A pouere persoun vp on lond  
 Vp on a day he gat hym more moneye  
 Than þe persoun gat in moneþis tweye 704  
 And þus with feynede flaterye & Iapis  
 He made the persoun & the puple hese apys  
 But trewely to tellyn at the laste  
 He was in cherche a noble ecclesiaste 708  
 Wel couthe he rede a lessoun or a story

But aldirbest he song an offratory  
 ffor wel he wiste whan that song was sunge  
 He muste preche & wel affile hyse tunge 712  
 To wynne syluer as he wel couthe  
 Therfore he song the meryerely & loude  
 Now haue I told 3ow sothly in a clause  
 The estat tharay the noumbre & ek the cause 716  
 Whi assemblid was this cumpayny  
 In southwerk at this ientil ostelry  
 That hy3te the tabbard faste by þ<sup>e</sup> belle  
 But now is tyme to 3ow for to telle 720  
 How that we beryn vs that ilke ny3t [leaf 141, back]  
 Whan that we were in that ostelrye aly3t  
 And after wole I telle of oure viage  
 And al the remenauht of oure<sup>1</sup> pilgrymage [1 u: later] 724  
 But fyrst I prey 3ow of 3oure curteysye  
 That 3e narette not myn velanye  
 Thow that I pleyndly speke in þis matere  
 To telle 3ow here wordys & here cher 728  
 Ne thow I speke here wordis properly  
 ffor this 3e knowyn als so wel as i<sup>2</sup> [2 1: later]  
 Who so schal telle a tale after a man  
 He mote reherse as nyh as euere he can 732  
 Eueryche a word 3if it be in his charge  
 Al speke he neuere so rewedely & large  
 Or elle he mote telle his tale ontrewē  
 Or feyne þyng or fyndyn wordis newe 736  
 He may not spare al-they he wer' his broþer  
 He mote as wel seyn on word as a noþer  
 Crist spak hym self ful brode in holy wryt  
 And wel 3e wote no velany is it 740  
 Ek plato seyth ho so can hym rede  
 The wordys<sup>3</sup> mote be chose to the dede [3 s: later]  
 Also I preye 3ow to for3eue it me  
 Al haue I not set folk in here degre 744  
 Here in this tale al as þey schulde stonde

22 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Cambridge MS.

Myn wit is schort ȝe may wel vndyrstonde  
 Gret chere mad oure ost vs euerychon  
 And to the soper sette he vs a-non 748  
 He seruede vs with vitayle at the beste  
 Strong was the wyn & wel to drynke vs liste  
 A semely man oure ost was with al  
 ffor to ben a marchal of an hal 752  
 A large man he was with eyne stepe  
 A fayrere burgeys is þere non in chepe.  
 Bold of hese speche & wis & wel I-tauȝt  
 And of manhod hym lakkede ryȝt noȝt<sup>1</sup> [<sup>1</sup> noȝt: later] [Cambridge stops till l. 985]  
 Eke therto he was right<sup>t</sup> a mery man [Sloane MS. 1685, lf 2, back]  
 And aftir soper pley n he bygan.  
 And spak of mirth among and othere thingis  
 Whanne that he hadde mad oure rykenynges 760  
 And seide thus now lordyngis trewly  
 Ye ben to me welcome ryȝt<sup>t</sup> hertily  
 ffor certis yf that I shal not<sup>t</sup> lye  
 I sawe nought<sup>t</sup> this yere so mery a companye 764  
 At ones in this herborowe as it<sup>t</sup> now  
 ffayn wolde I don you myrthe wiste I how  
 And of a myrthe I am right<sup>t</sup> now bithought  
 To don yow ese and it<sup>t</sup> shal coste nought. 768  
 Ye gon to Caunterbery god yow spede  
 The blisfult martir quyte you youre mede  
 And wel I wote as ye gon by the weye  
 Ye schapen yow to talen and to pleye 772  
 ffor truly comfort ne mirth is noon  
 To riden by the weye dounbe as a stoon  
 And therfore wole y maken you disport  
 As I seide arst<sup>t</sup> and don yow som comfort /. 776  
 And if yow liketh alle by oon assent  
 fforto stonden att<sup>t</sup> my Iuggement<sup>t</sup>  
 And forto werken as I shal yow seye  
 To morowe whanne ye riden by the weye 780  
 Now so god saue me at my most nede



But ye be merie I wole yeue yow myn heede [Sloane MS. 1685]  
 Holde up youre hondis withoute more speche  
 Oure councel was not long<sup>t</sup> forto seche 784  
 Vs thought<sup>t</sup> it<sup>t</sup> was not<sup>t</sup> worth to make to wys  
 And grauntide hym withouten more avys.  
 And bade hym seie his verdoit as hym liste  
 Lordlyngis *quod* he herkeneth now for the beste 788  
 But take it<sup>t</sup> nought / I praie 3ow in disdeigne  
 This is the poynt<sup>t</sup> to speke short and pleigne  
 That<sup>t</sup> eche of yow to short with oure weye  
 In this viage shal telle tales tweye 792  
 To caunterbury ward I mene it<sup>t</sup> so  
 And homward he shal tellen other two  
 Of auentoures that<sup>t</sup> haue bifalle  
 And which of yow that<sup>t</sup> berith him best<sup>t</sup> of alle 796  
 That<sup>t</sup> is to seyn that<sup>t</sup> tellith in this cas  
 Tales of best<sup>t</sup> sentence and moost<sup>t</sup> solas  
 Shal haue a souper/ at oure aldercost<sup>t</sup>  
 Here in this place sittynge bi this post<sup>t</sup> 800  
 Whanne that<sup>t</sup> we comen ageyn fro Cauntirbury  
 And forto make yow the more myry  
 I wole my siluen goodly with 3ou ride  
 Right at<sup>t</sup> myn owne caste and be youre gyde 804  
 And who so wole my iugement withseye  
 Shal paye al that<sup>t</sup> we spende by the weye  
 And if<sup>t</sup> ye vouche saaf that<sup>t</sup> it<sup>t</sup> be so  
 Telle me anoon without<sup>t</sup> ony word moo 808  
 And I wole erly shape me therfore  
 This thing<sup>t</sup> was graunted *and* oure othes swore  
 With ful glad herte and preien him also  
 That<sup>t</sup> he wolde vouche saaf forto do soo 812  
 And that he wolde be oure gouernour  
 And of oure tales Iugge and reportour/  
 And sette a soper / at<sup>t</sup> a certeyn prys  
 And we wolen reuled ben at<sup>t</sup> youre deys 816  
 In high and logh and thus by oon assent<sup>t</sup>

We ben acordid to the Iuggement<sup>t</sup> [Sloane MS. 1685]  
 And theruppon the wyn was fet<sup>t</sup> anoon  
 We dronken and to rest<sup>t</sup> wente echon 820  
 Withouten ony lenger / taryng  
 A morow whanne the day gan to springe  
 Vp roos oure oost<sup>t</sup> and was oure alde cok<sup>t</sup>  
 And gaderede us to gidre in a flok<sup>t</sup> 824  
 And forth we riden a litil more than pas  
 Onto the watering<sup>t</sup> of<sup>t</sup> seynt Thomas  
 And there oure oost gan his hors areste  
 And seide lordis herkeneth if<sup>t</sup> yow leste 828  
 Ye wote youre forward and I it yow recorde [leaf 3, back]  
 If euensong<sup>t</sup> and morowe song accorde  
 Let<sup>t</sup> se now who shal telle the firste tale  
 As euere mote I drynke wyn or ale 832  
 Who so rebelle to my Iuggement<sup>t</sup>  
 Shal paye for all that<sup>t</sup> by the weye is spent<sup>t</sup>  
 Now drawith Cutt<sup>t</sup> er<sup>t</sup> that<sup>t</sup> ye ferther/ twynne  
 Which that<sup>t</sup> hath the shortest shal bigynne 836  
 Sir knyght quod he my maister/ and my lord  
 Now drawith Cutt<sup>t</sup> for that<sup>t</sup> is accord  
 Cometh nere quod he my lady prioresse  
 And ye Sir clerk lat<sup>t</sup> be youre shamfastnesse 840  
 Ne studieth noght<sup>t</sup> leye hond to euery man  
 Anoon to drawe euery wight<sup>t</sup> bigan  
 And shortly forto tellen as it<sup>t</sup> was  
 Were it<sup>t</sup> by auenture or by sort or cas 844  
 The sothe is the Cutt<sup>t</sup> fel to the knyght  
 Of<sup>t</sup> which ful blythe and glad was euery wight  
 And tellen he most his tale as it<sup>t</sup> was resoun  
 By forward and by composicioun 848  
 As ye han herd what<sup>t</sup> nedith wordes moo  
 And whanne this gode man sawe that<sup>t</sup> it<sup>t</sup> was soo  
 As he that<sup>t</sup> wys was and obedient<sup>t</sup>  
 To kepen his forward by his fre assent<sup>t</sup> 852  
 He seide sithen I shal bigynne the game

What welcome be the Cut a goddis name. [Sloane MS. 1685]

Now lat us ride and herkneth what I seie

And with that word we riden forth oure weye 856

And he bigan with riȝt a mery chere

His tale anoon and seide as ye may heere

Iamque domos patrias scithie post prelia gentis.  
Prelia laurigero & cetera. ¶ Heere endith the prolog  
of this book : and heere bigynneth the first tale which  
is the knyghte tale

[Notes referred to in the references to the *Knights Tale*.]

[1. Boccaccio calls *Teseo* 'duca di Atene' (I. 13), and says that his father *Egeo* was 're d'Atene' (I. 6).

2. '— in giubba iscalza' (*ex deshabelle*). III. 8.

3. 'Co' biondi crini avvolti alla sua testa.' III. 10.

4. The whole debate in prison is an imitation of the longer debate (in the *Teseide*) when they meet in the grove.

5. 'Love cannot be given up as thou deemest : and he loves but little, who ceases loving in order to keep a promise.' V. 51.

6. Comp. *Troilus and Cressida*, IV. st. 136 :

— For some men sain, that God seeth all beforne,

Than mote it fallen, though men had it sworne,

That purveiaunce hath seene beforne to be—

7. Videvi storie per tutto dipinte

E'l grand Ercole vide tra costoro. VII. 62.

8. 'Richezza' is Porter in the *Teseide*, VII. 64 : the *Roman de la Rose* is followed here.

9. See *H. of Fame*, 198 ; and Albricus Philosophus in Staveren's *Auctores Mythographi*, 1702, vol. ii. p. 903.

10. Boccaccio makes the temple lighted by altar-fires, kindled from the flames of plundered cities. VII. 35.

11. 'Amyddes of the' place sat 'la virtù tristissima.' VII. 34.

12. 'La Morte armata vide e lo stupore.' VII. 35.

13. 'Le navi bellatrici.' VII. 37. Neither Boccaccio, nor yet his prototype Statius, speaks of any ships as *burnt*, but merely as *trophies*.

14. The points marked VI. 21, 22, are taken from the description of 'Agamemnone.'

15. The points here are from the descriptions of 'Ippodamo' (VI. 29), of 'Peleo' (VI. 17, 16), and of 'Peritoo' (VI. 41).

16. Compare also stanza 42, 'con vittime piosse.'

17. 'Io il diletto, e tu n' abbia l' onore.' VII. 27.

18. Arcita (in Boccaccio) comes from the quarter of 'Euro' (VII. 114) : Palemone comes 'Dall' altra parte' (VII. 119). No mention is made by Boccaccio of their banners being *red* and *white*.

19. Bocc. makes many of them slain : 'Artifilio,' 'Cornisso' (VIII. 15), 'Rifeo,' 'Arione' (36), 'Narizio' (39), and others, and describes their funerals (X. 4—8).

20. Boccaccio makes only a general mention of the care and comfort bestowed on the wounded (X. 10).

21. 'But [of the wounded] Arcita alone could not be cured : so much was he shattered inwardly by his fall' (X. 11).

22. Point from Boccaccio, differently turned (X. 13).

23. Points from Boccaccio, differently turned (X. 13, 12).

24. 'I await the last kisses from thee, oh dear spouse' (X. 65).

25. 'egli è gentile' (X. 62).

26. 'Nun potea racconsolar Teseo,' says Boccaccio (XI. 9), *not* excepting 'Egeo,' but he immediately goes on to speak of the old man's attempt to console 'Palemone,' and the rest,—without the slightest success (XI. 11).—(See also XI. 33.)

27. 'Non men dolente, Emilia pur piangea,

I circostanti più pianger facea' (XI. 31).

28. Right and left of Palemone (XI. 40).

29. In the hands of the noblest of the Greeks (XI. 37).]

¶ *ffabula militis.* [Sloane MS. 1685, leaf 4]*Boccaccio  
Teseida*: means tr-  
lated,  
[general li-  
: slight lit

**W** Hylom as olde stories tellen vs ¶ *ffabula militis.*  
 Ther was a Duk that hight Thesius\* [*Capitulum . Im.* [\* See p. 25, n. 1.]  
 Of Athenes he was lord *and* governour  
 And in his tyme sich a conquerour  
 That gretter was noon vnder the sonne  
 fful many a riche Contre hadde he wonne 864

What with his wisdom and his Chivalrie  
 He conqueride al the regne of femyny  
 The whylom was clepid sithia  
 And weddide the queene ypolita 868  
 And brought hir hom with hym in his Contre  
 With mich glorie and gret solempnyte  
 And eke hir yonge sister Emelye  
 And thus with victory and with melodie 872  
 Lat I this noble Duk to Athenes ride  
 And al his oost in armes hym biside  
 And certis if it ne were to longe to heere  
 I wolde haue told fully the manere 876  
 How wymmen was the regne of femynye  
 By Theseus and by his chyualrie  
 And of the gret batayle for the nones  
 Bitwixen athenes and Amazones 880  
 And how assegid was ypolita  
 The fair / hardi queene of scithia  
 And of the feeste that was at hir wedding  
 And of the . . . .<sup>1</sup> at hir / home comyng<sup>1</sup> [<sup>1</sup> Rubbed] 884  
 But al that [t]hing I moot as now forbere  
 I haue god woot a large feld to ere  
 And weyk ben the oxen in<sup>2</sup> my plough [<sup>2</sup> Rubbed]  
 The remenaunt of the tale is long ynough 888  
 I wole not letten eke noon of this Route



Lat euery felowe telle his tale a-boute	[Sloane MS. 1685]	<i>Tesside.</i>
And lat' se now who shal the soper wyne		
And ther as I left I wole bygyne	892	
¶ This Duk of whom I make mecioun	¶ Incipit narracio.	II. 25.
Whanne he was comen almost to the town		
In al his wele and his moost' pride	[leaf 4, back]	
He was ware as he caste ey3e aside	896	
Where that' ther knelide in the high weye		
A company of' ladies tweye and tweye		
Ech aftir/ other/ cladde in 'chothes blake	[1 So in MS.]	
But sich a crie and sich a woo they make	900	
That in this world is creature lyuyng		
That' herde sich another/ weymentyng		
And of' this crie thei nolde neuere stente		II. 25. (before the car
Tyl they the reynes of' his bridel hente	904	
What' folk' be ye that' at' myn hom comyng		• II. 25.
Disturblen so my feeste with cryng		•
Quod Theseus haue 3e so gret' enuye		•
Of' myn honour that' thus compleyne and crie	908	•
Or who hath yow mysboden or offendid		
And telleth me if' it' may be amendid		
And whi that' ye ben clothed thus in blak'		•
The eldest lady of hem alle spak'	912	
Whanne she hadde swouned with a deedly chere		
That' it' was reuthe forto seen and here		
She seide. lord to whom fortune hath 3yuen		
Victorie and as a conquerour/ to lyuen	916	
Not' greueth vs youre glorie and youre honour/		• II. 27.
But' we biseke mercy and socour		
Haue mercy on oure wo and oure distresse		
Sum drope of pite thorough thi gentilnesse	920	
Vppon vs wrecchid wymmen lat' yow falle		
ffor certis lord ther is noon of vs alle		• II. 28.
That she nath ben a duchesse or a quene		•
Now be we caytifs as it is wel sene	924	
Thanked be fortune and hir/ fals wheel		

That noon estat ensureth forto ben wel	[Sloane MS. 1685]	<i>Tesside.</i>
Now certis lord to abide youre presence		
Heere in this temple of the goddess clemence	928	(mentioned in II. 17.)
We haue be waytyng al this fourte-nyght		
Helpe vs lord sith it is in thy myght.		
¶ I wrecche which that wepe and weyle thus	[leaf 5]	
Was whylom wif of kyng cappaneus	932	. II. 28.
That starf at thebes cursid be that day		
And all we that ben in this array		
And maken all this lementacioun		
We losten all oure hosbondis at that toun	936	
While pat the assege there abowte lay		
And yet now the olde Creon weiloway		II. 31.
That lord is now of thebes citee		II. 30.
ffulfillid with ire and of iniquitee	940	II. 31.
He for despite and for his tyrannye		
To don the dede bodies velonye		
Of alle oure lordes which that ben slawe		
Hath all the bodies on a hepe I-drawe	944	
And wole not suffre hem by non assent		. II. 31.
Neither/ to ben I-buried neither I-brent		.
But makith houndis ete hem in dispite		.
And with that word with outen more respite	948	II. 33.
Thei fyllen gruf and crieden pitously		
Haue on vs wrecchid wymmen sum mercy		
And lat oure sorowe synken in thyne herte		
¶ This gentil duke from his Coursour/ he sterte	952	
With herte pitous whanne he herde hem speke		
Hym thoughte that his hert wold breke		
Whanne he sawe hem so pitee and so mate		
That whilom were of so grete astate	956	II. 36-9.
And in his armes he hem vp hente		
And hem counfortith in ful good entente		
And swoor his oothe as he was trewe knyght /		
He wole don so ferforthly his myght	960	
Vppon the treaunt Creon hem to wreke		

That alle the puple of grece shold speke		<i>Teseide.</i>
How creon was of thebeus y-serued	963	
As he that hath his deth ful wel disserued		[Sloane extract ends.]
And ryȝt a-non with-oute more abod		[Cambr. MS. Gg. 4. 27, ff 146]
Hese baner he displayeþ & forth rod		II. 50.
To thebes-ward & al hese ost by hese side		
No ner athenys wolde he go ne ryde	968.	II. 40.
Ne take hese ese fully half a day		
But onward on hese way þat nyȝt he lay		
And sente anon Ipolita the quene		II. 40-2.
And emelie here ȝynge systyr schene	972	
Vn to the toun of Athenys to dwelle		
And forth he rit ther is no more to telle		
The rede statue of mars with spere & targe		
So schynnyth in hese white baner large	976	
That alle the feldis glederyn vp & doun		
And bi hese baner is born hese penoun		
Of gold ful ryche in whiche þere was I-bete		
The mynatour whiche þat he slow in Crete	980	
Thus ryȝt þis deuk þus ryȝt þis conquerour		
And in his cost of cheualrie the flour		
Til that he come to thebes & a-ligthe		
ffayre in a feld there he thoute to fyghte	984	II. 53-78.
But schortli for to spekyng of this thyng		
Witht Creon which that was of thebes kyng		
He faught & slow hym manly as a knyght		
In pleyn batayle & putte the folk to fleyȝ	988	
And by assent he wan the sete aftyr		
And rent a-doun bothe wal & spere <sup>1</sup> & raftyr		[1 late a over e]
And to þe ladyis he restorede ageyn		
The bonys of here frendis þat were slayn	992	
To don obsequies as was þo the gyse		
But it were al to longe for to deuyse		II. 80-1
The grete clamour & the waymentyng		
That þe ladyis made at the brennyng	996	
Of the bodyis & the grete honour		

That thesuz the noble conquerour		
Doth to þe ladijs whan þey from hym weynte		
But schortely for to telle is myn entente	1000	
Whan that this worthi duk this thesius	[leaf 145, back]	II. 74.
Hath Creon slayn & wonne thebes thus		
Stille in that feld he tok al nyȝt hese reste		
And dede with al the cuntre as hym leste	1004	
To ransake in the taas of bedijs dede		II. 85.
Hem for to strepe of harneys & of wede		
The pilouris dydyn besynesse & cure		
Aftr the batayle & discumfiture	1008	
And so bi-fel that in the taas was founde		• II. 85.
Thorgh girt with manye a bloody wounde		•
Two ȝonge knyȝtys liggyng by & by		•
Bothe in on armys wrouȝt ful richely	1012	
Of whiche too Arcita hyȝte þat on	Arcita.	
And that oper knyȝt hyȝte palomoun	Palamon.	
Not fully queke ne fully dede þey were		
But by here cote armoure & by here gere	1016	II. 86.
Theroudis knew hem best in special		
As þey þat were of the blod ryal		
Of Thebes & of systeryn to I-born		
Out of the taas the pilouris han hem torn	1020	
And han hem caryed softe on to the tente		II. 87.
Of thesyus & ful sone hem sente		II. 89.
To Athenes to dwellyn in presoun		
Perpetually he nolde no raunsom	1024	
And whan this worthi deuk hap þus I-don		II. 90-95.
He tok hese Ost & hom he rit a-non		
With laurer crouned as a conquerour		
And there he lyuyth in ioye & in honour	1028	
Terme of lyf what nedip wordis mo		
And in a tour in angwisch & in wo		III. 2
This Palamoun & hese felawe Arcite		
ffor eueremor ther may mo gold hem quyte	1032	
This passeth ȝer be ȝer & day be day		



Til it fel onys in a monyth of may		
That emale that fayrere was to sene		
Than is the lylie vp on hese stalke grene	1036	[See XII. 58.]
And frosscher than þe may with flourys newe	[leaf 146]	
ffor with the rose colour frosch here hewe		
I not whiche was fynere of hem too		
Er it were day as was here wone to do	1040	• III. 10.
Sche was a-resin & al redy dyzt		•
ffor may wele haue no slogardye on nyzt		
The sesyn prekyth euery gentyl herte		
And makyth it out of hese slep to sterte	1044	
And seyth a-rys & do þyn obseruaunce		
This makith emalie to haue remembraunce		
To don honure to may & for to ryse		
I-cloþed was sche fresch for to deuyse*	[* See p. 25, n. 2.] 1048	III. 8.
Here zelwe her was broyded in a tresse†	[† See p. 25, n. 3.]	III. 10.
Be-hynde here bak a 3erde long I gesse		
And in the gardyn at the sunne vp-riste		III. 8-10.
Sche walkyth vp & down & as here lyst	1052	
Sche gaderith flouris party white & rede		
To make a suptyl garlond for here hede		• III. 10.
And as an aungel heueneliche sche song		•
The grete tour that was so thikke & strong	1056	III. 11.
Whiche of the castel was the chef donioun		
There as the knyztis weryn In presoun		
Of whiche I tolde 3ow & telle schal		
As euene ioynande to the castel wal	1060	
There as this emale hadde here pleyng	Emelyc.	
Bryzt was the sunne & cler in that morwenyng		
And palamoun þis woful presoner		
As was hese wone be leue of hese gayler	1064	[ <i>Arctita et levo</i> III. 11.]
Was resyn & romede in a chau[m]bre an hey		
In whiche he al the cete sey		
And ek the gardyn ful of braunchis grene		
There as this frosche Emelyc the schene	1068	
Was in here walk & romede vp & down		

This sorweful louere this palamoun		
Goth in the chambre romynge to & fro		
And to hymselfe compleynyng of hese wo	1072	
That I was born ful ofte he seyde allas		[leaf 146, back]
And so be-fel be auenture & cas		
That þorow a wyndowe thikke of manye a barre		• III. 11.
Of yryn gret & squire as ony sparre	1076	•
He caste his eye vp on emelyea		
And þerwithal he blenthe & cryede A		... tutto s. Grido. Om. III. 17.
As thow he stongyn were to þ <sup>e</sup> herte		
And with þat cry a-non arcite vp styrt	1080	
And seyde cosyn myn what eylith þe		
That art so pale & dedly on to se		
Whi cryestow who hath the don offense		
ffor goddys lone tak al in pacience	1084	
Oure prysoun for it may non oþer be		
ffortune hap <sup>1</sup> þouyn vs þis aduersite		[1 o altered]
Sum wekede aspect or disposicioun		
Of saturne by sum constolacioun	1088	
Ilath þouyn vs þis al-þow we hadde it sworn		
So stod the heuene whan that we were born		
We muste endure it þis is the schorte & pleyn		
This Palamoun onswerde & seyde a-geyn	1092	
Cosyn for sothe of this opynyoun		
þow hast a vayn ymagynacyoun		
This prisoun causede me not for to crye		
But I was hort ryȝt now thorgh-out myn ye	1096	• III. 16.
In-to myn herte that wele myn bane be		III. 20.
The fayrenesse of myn lady þat I se		
þond in the gardyn romyn to & fro		
Is cause of al myn cryinge & myn wo	1100	
I ne wot wheþer sche be woman or godesse		
But venus it is sothly as I gesse		• III. 14.
And þerwithal on kneis down he fel		
And seyde Venus ȝif it be þyn wil	1104	
þow in this gardyn thus to transfigure		

Be-for me sorweful wreche cryature  
 Out of this prysoun help þat we may skape  
 And ȝif so be myn destene be schape 1108  
 By eterne world to deyen in presoun [leaf 147]  
 Of oure kynrede haue sum compassioun  
 That is so lowe brouȝt be tyranye  
 And with that word Arcite gan asspie 1112  
 Where as this lady romede to & fro  
 And with that syȝt here beute hurte hym so  
 That ȝif þat Palamoun was woundede sore  
 Arcite is hurt as wel as he or more 1116  
 And with a sik he seyde pitously  
 The frossche beute sloth me sodeynly  
 Of here that romyth in the ȝondir plase  
 And but I haue here mersy & here grase 1120  
 That I may sen here at the leste weye  
 I nam but ded þere nys no more to seye  
 This Palamoun whan he þo wordis herde  
 Dispitousli he lokede & answerde 1124  
 Wheȝer seyst þou this in earnest or in pley  
 Nay quod arcyte in earnest be myn fey  
 God help me so me lyst but euel pleye  
 This palamoun gan knytte hese browis tweye 1128  
 It were to the quod he no gret honour\* [\* See p. 25, n. 4.]  
 ffor to be fals ne for to be traytour  
 To me that am thyn cosyn & thyn brothir  
 I-sworn ful depe & eche of vs to oþer 1132  
 That neuere for to deyin in peyne  
 Til that the deth departe schal vs tweyne  
 Neyȝer of vs in loue to hynderyn oþer  
 Ne in non oþer cas myn leue broȝer 1136  
 But þat þou schuldist trewely forþere me  
 In euery cas & I schal forthere the  
 This was þyn oth & myn also serteyn  
 I wote it wel þou darist it not with-seyn 1140  
 Thus art þou of myn conseyll out of doute

III. 16-17.  
(reversing the or-  
der of the names)

V. 43.

And now þou woldist falsely ben aboute  
 To loue myn lady whom I loue & serue  
 And euere schal tyl that myn herte sterue 1144  
 Now certis false arcite þou schat not so [leaf 147, back]

I louede here fyrst & tolde þ<sup>e</sup> myn wo  
 As to myn conseyll & to myn br[o]þer sworn  
 To forthere me as I haue told be-forn 1148  
 ffor which þou art boundyn as a knyzt

To helpyn me ȝif it leye in þy myzt  
 Or elle art þou fals I dare wel seyn  
 This arcite ful proudely spak a-geyn 1152

þou schat *quod* he be rapere fals than I  
 But þou art fals I telle þ<sup>e</sup> vttyrly  
 ffor paramour I louede here ferst er þou  
 What wit þou seyn þou wist no ȝit now 1156

Wheþer sche be a woman or goddesse  
 Thyn is affecciounz of holynesse  
 And myn is loue as to creature  
 ffor whiche I telle þe myn auenture 1160

As to myn cosyn & myn broþer sworn  
 I pose that þou louedist here be-forn  
 Wist þou not wel the olde clerkys sawe  
 That ho schal ȝeue a louere ony lawe 1164

Loue is a grettere lawe be myn pan  
 Than may ben ȝouyn to ony erthely man  
 And þerfore posityf lawe & swich decree  
 Is brokyn alday for loue in eche degree 1168

A man mote nedis loue maugre in hese hed  
 He may not flen þat þogh he schulde be ded  
 Al be sche mayde or wedew or elle wif  
 And it is not likly al thyn lyf 1172

To stondyn in here grace no more schal I  
 ffarewel þou wist þyn seluyn verayly  
 That þou & I ben dampned to presoun  
 Perpetuelly vs geynyth no raunsun 1176

We stryue as dede the houndis for the bon



They fouzte al day & 3it here part was non	
Ther cam a kete whil that þey were wrothe	
That bar away the bon be-twixe hem bothe	1180
And þerfore at the kyngis court myn broþer	[leaf 148]
Eche man for hym self ther is non oper	
Loue 3if the lyst for I loue & ay schal	
And sothli leue broþer this is al	1184
Here in this presoun mote we endure	
And euerych of vs take his auenture	
Gret was the stryf & long be-twixe hem tweye	
3if that I hadde leyser for to seye	1188
But to þe effect it happede on a day	
To telle it 3ow as schortly as I may	
A worthi deuk that hyzte perotheus	
That felawe was vn to deuk Theseu	1192
Syn thilke day þat þey were childeryn lite	
Was come to athenes hese falawe to visite	
And for to pleye as he was wone to do	
ffor in this world he louede no man so	1196
And he louede hym as tendirly ageyn	
So wel þey louedyn as olde bokys seyn	
That whan that on was ded sothly to telle	
His felawe wente & souzte hym doun in helle	1200
But of that story liste me not to wryte	
Deuk Perotheus louede wel arcite	
And hadde hym knowyn at thebes þer be 3ere	
And fynelli at requist & at preyere	1204
Of perotheus with-outyn ony raunsoun	
Deuk Theseus hym let out of presoun	
ffreli to gon whil that hym leste ouyral	
In swich agyse as I 3ow telle shal <sup>1</sup>	[ <sup>1</sup> altered from caul] 1208
This was the forward pleyndly for tendit	
Be-twixe Thesius & hym Arcite	
That it were that Arcite were founde	
Euere in his lyf be day or nyzt or stounde	1212
In ony cuntre of this thesyus	

III. 47.

III. 51-4.

And hee were caught it was acordit þus  
 That with a swerd he wolde lese his hed  
 Ther nas non oþer remedie ne red 1216  
 But takyth his leue & homward he hym spedde [leaf 148, back]  
 let hym be war his nekke lith to wedde  
 How gret a sorwe sufferith now arcyte  
 The deth he felyth thorgh his herte smyte 1220  
 He wepith weyleth cryeþ pitously  
 To slen hym self he waytyth priuily  
 He seyde alas that day that I was bore  
 Now is myn prisoun werse þan be-fore 1224  
 Now is me schapyn eternally to dwelle  
 Not in purgatory but in helle  
 Allas that euere knew I perotheus  
 ffor elle hadde I dwellid with thesyus 1228  
 I-fetered in his prisoun euere mo  
 Thanne hadde I ben in blysse & not in wo  
 Only the syȝthe of her' whom that I serue  
 Though I neuere here grace may disserue 1232  
 Wolde han suffysed ryȝt I-now for me  
 O dere cosyn palamoun quod he  
 This is the victorie of this auenture  
 fful blyful in prisoun mayst þow endure 1236  
 In prysoun nay parde but in paradys  
 Wel hath fortune I-turnede the deys  
 That hast the syȝt of here & I the absens  
 ffor possible is syn þow hast here presens 1240  
 And art a knyȝt a worthi & able  
 That by sum cas syn fortune is chaungable  
 Thow mayȝt to þyn desyr sumtyme atteyne  
 But I that am exiled & barayne 1244  
 Of alle grace & in so gret dispeyr  
 That þere nys erthe watyr fyre ne eyr  
 Ne criatur that of hem makyd is  
 That may me helpyn or don comfort in this 1248  
 Wel ouȝte I sterue in wanhope & distresse

• Teseide.

• III. 54.

[Gen. resembl.  
See III. 75, &c.]

ffarwel myn lyf myn lust & myn gladnesse  
 Allas whi pleyne men so in comune  
 On puruyaunce of god or of fortune 1252  
 That ȝeuyth hem ful ofte in manye a gyse [leaf 149]  
 Wel betyr þan þey can hem self deuyse  
 Sum man desiryth for to haue richesse  
 That is cause of hese mordere or gret seknesse 1256  
 And some wolde out of hese presoun fayn  
 That in hese hous is of hese meyne slayn  
 Infynyte harmys ben in this matere  
 We wote not what þyng þat we preyen here 1260  
 We farn as he þat dronke is as a mous  
 A dronke man wot wel that he hath an hous  
 But he not whiche the ryȝte weye is þedyr  
 And to a dronke man the weye is sledyr 1264  
 And sertys in þis world so faryn we  
 We sekyn faste aftyr felycite  
 But we gon wrong oftyn trewely  
 Thus may we seyn alle & namely I 1268  
 That wende & hadde a gret opynyoun  
 That I myȝte skapyn from prysoun  
 Thanne hadde I be in ioie & parfyt hele  
 There now I am exilyd from myn wele 1272  
 Syn that I may not sen ȝow emalye • III. 75.  
 I nam but ded þere nys non oþer weye .  
 Vp on that oþer syde palamōn  
 Whan that he woste Arcyte was a-goñ 1276  
 Swich sorwe he makyth that þ<sup>e</sup> grete tour  
 Resounnyth of hese ȝoulyng & clamour  
 The pure feterys of hese schenys grete  
 Weryn of hese bittere salte terys wete 1280  
 Allas *quod* he arcita cosyn myn  
 Of al oure stryf god wot the freut is þyn  
 Thow walkyst now in thebes at þyn large  
 And of myn wo þou ȝeuyst lityl charge 1284  
 Thu mayst sen þou hast wisdom & manhede

Assemblyn alle the folk of oure kynrede  
 And make a werre so scharp on this cyte  
 That by sum auenture or sum trete 1288  
 Thw mayst haue here to lady & to wyf [leaf 149, back]  
 ffor whom that I muste nedys lese myn lyf  
 ffor as be weye of possibilite  
 Sithe þou art at thyn large of prisoun fre 1292  
 And art a lord gret is thyn auauntage  
 More than is myn that sterue here in a cage  
 ffor I mot wepe & waile whil I leue  
 With al the wo that prisoun may me ȝeue 1296  
 And ek with peyne that loue me ȝeuyth also  
 That dubelyth al myn turment & myn wo  
 Therwith the fyr of ielusye vp sterte  
 With-inne hese brest & hente hym by the herte 1300  
 So wodly that he lyk was to bi-holde  
 The boxtere or the asschyn dede and colde  
 Thanne seyde he O crewel goddis þat gouerne  
 This word woth byndyng of ȝoure word eterne 1304  
 And wretyn in the table of athamaunte  
 Thorw parlemen & ȝoure eterne graunte  
 What is mankynde more on to ȝow holde  
 Thus is the schep that rokiþ in the folde 1308  
 ffor slayn is man ryght as a nothir beste  
 And dwellith ek in prisoun & areste  
 And hath seknesse & gret aduersite  
 And ofte tyme gilteles parde 1312  
 What gouernynge is in this prescience  
 That gilteles turmentyth innocence  
 And encreseth þis al myn penaunce  
 That man is boundyn to hese obseruaunce 1316  
 ffor goddis sake to lettyn of hese wille  
 Ther as a beste may al hese lust fulfylle  
 And whan a beste is ded he hath no peyne  
 But man aftyr his ded hym muste wepe & pleyne 1320  
 Though in þis world he haue care & wo



With-outyn doute it may stondyn so  
 The answere of þis lete I to deuynys  
 But wel I wot that in þis world gret peyne is 1324  
 Allas I se a serpent or a thef [leaf 150]  
 That manye a trewe man hath don myschef  
 Gon at hese large & wher hym liste may turne  
 But I mot ben in prisoun þour saturne 1328  
 And ek thorgh Iuno ielous & ek wood  
 That hath distroyed wol ny al the blood  
 Of thebes with hese waste wallys wyde  
 And venus sleth me on þat oþer syde 1332  
 ffor Ielousie & fer of hym Arcyte  
 Now wele I stynte of palamoun a lite  
 And late hym in hese prysoun styлле dwelle  
 And of Arcyta forth I wele 3ow telle Arcita  
 The somyr passeþ & the nyztys longe  
 Encresyn double wise the peynys stronge  
 Bothe of the louere & the prisounner  
 I not ho hath the wofulere<sup>1</sup> myster [1 here; later.] 1340  
 ffor schorth for to seyn this palamoun  
 Perpetuely is dampned to prisoun  
 In cheynys & in feterys to ben ded  
 And Arcyte is exiled vp hese hed 1344  
 ffor eueremo as out of that cuntre  
 Ne neuere mo schal hese lady se  
 3ow louerys axe I now þis questioun  
 Ho hath the werse arcyte or Palamoun 1348  
 The ton may sen his lady day be day  
 But in prisoun ho mot dwelle alway  
 That othir where hym leste may ride or go  
 But sen hese lady schal he neuere mo 1352  
 Now demyth as 3ow lyste 3e þat can  
 ffor I wele telle forth as I be-gan

[No gap in the MS.]

*Tesside.*

"paurosa gelosa"  
V. 2.

[PART II. *No gap in the MS.*]

Whan that Arcyte to thebes comyn was  
 fful ofte a day he swelte & seyde allas 1356  
 ffor sen hese lady schal he neuere mo  
 And schortly to concludyn al hese wo  
 So meche sorwe hadde neuere creature  
 That is or schal whil that þe world may dure 1360  
 Hese slep hese mete // hese drynk is hym beraft [1f 150, bk] IV. 26, 27  
 That lene he wex / & dreye as is a schaft  
 Hese cyne holwe / & gresely to beholde • IV. 28.  
 Hese hewe falwe / & pale as<sup>1</sup> asschen colde [1 as: later] 1364 • IV. 27.  
 And solitarie he was / & euere alone  
 And waylynge al the nyȝt makynge hese mone  
 And ȝif he herde song or instrument  
 Thanne myȝte he wepe he myȝte not be stent 1368  
 So feble ek weryn hese spiritis & so lowe IV. 29.  
 And chaungit so þat no man coude hym knowe  
 Hese speche nor hese voys þow men it herde  
 And in hese ger for al the world he ferde 1372  
 Not only lik the louere maladye  
 Of hereos but rathere lyk manye  
 Engenderid of humourys malencolik  
 Be-forn hese owene selle fantastik 1376  
 And schortly turned was al vp so doun  
 Bothe abit & ek<sup>2</sup> disposicioun [2 ek: later]  
 Of his this woful louere daun Arcite  
 What schulde i of hese wo alday endyt 1380  
 Whan he endured hadde a ȝer or to  
 This crewel turment & this peyne & wo  
 At thebes in his court as I seyde  
 Vp on a nyȝt in slep as he hym leyde 1384  
 Hym thouȝte that the vengede god mercurye  
 Be-forn hym stod & bad hym to be murye  
 Hese slepi ȝerde in hond he bar vp ryȝt  
 An hat he werede vp on hese herys bryȝt 1388

Arayed was þis god as he tok kep  
 As he was whan that Argus tok hese slep  
 And seyde hym thus to Athenys schat þou wynde  
 There is the schapyn of thi wo an ende 1392  
 And with that word Areyte wok & styrt  
 Now trewely how sore that me smerte  
 Quod he tathenys / rygh now wele I fare  
 Ne for the dred of deth schal I not spare 1396  
 To se myn lady that I loue & serue [leaf 151]  
 In here presence I rekke not to sterue  
 And with that word he cauȝte a gret myrour  
 And saw that schaunged was al hese colour 1400  
 And say hese vesage al in anoþer kynde  
 And ryȝt a-non It ran hym in hese mynde  
 That sithe hese face was so disfyguryd  
 Of maledye whiche he hadde endured 1404  
 He myȝte wel ȝif that he bar hym lowe  
 Leuyn in athenys euere more onknowe  
 And sen hese lady wel ney day be day  
 And ryȝt a-non he chaungede hese aray 1408  
 And cladde hym as a pore labourer  
 And al alone saue only a squyer  
 That knew hese preuyteis & al hese cas  
 Whiche was disguised porely as he was 1412  
 Tatthenys is he gon þe nexte way  
 And to the court he wente vp-on a day  
 And at the gate he proferyth hese seruyse  
 To drogge & drawe what so men wolde deuyse 1416  
 And shortly of this mater for to seyn  
 He fil in offys with a chaumbyrleyn  
 The whiche that dwellynge was with emalye  
 ffor he was wys & coude sone aspie 1420  
 Of euery seruauant whiche that seruyth here  
 Wel coude he hewyn wode & watyr bere  
 ffor he was ȝong & myȝty for the nonys  
 And þerto he was long & big of bonys 1424

IV. 38.

pover calletto,  
 IV. 22.  
 umil garzone,  
 IV. 22.  
 povero valletto,  
 IV. 40.

To don that ony with can hym deuyse		
A 3er or too he was in þis seruyse		
Page of the chaumbere of emale þ <sup>e</sup> bryȝt		
And philostrate he seyde þat he hyȝt	1428	[Pentec IV. 3. &c.]
But half so wel be-louyd a man as he		
Ne was there neuer in court of hese degre		
He was so Ientyl of condicioun		
That þour-out al the court was hese renoun	1432	
They seydyn that it were a charite	[leaf 151, back]	
That Thesys wolde enhaunsyn hese degre		
And puttyn hym in worschepful seruyse		
There that he myȝte hese vertue excercise	1436	
And þus with-inne a while his name is spronge		IV. 59.
Bothe of hese dedis & hese goode tunge		
That Thesius hath takyn hym so ner		
That of hese chaumbere he made hym a squyer	1440	
And ȝaf hym gold to meyntene his degre		
And ek men brouȝtyn hym out of hese cuntre		
ffrom 3er to 3er ful priuily hese rente		
But onestly & slyly he it spente	1444	
That no man wonderede how þat he it hadde		
And thre 3er in this wise his lyf he ladde		
And bar hym so in pes & ek in werre		
Ther was no man that thesys hath derre	1448	IV. 59.
And in this blisse lete I now arcite		
And speke I wele of palamoun a lite		
In derknesse & horrible & strong prisoun		V. 1.
This seuene 3er hath setyn palamoun	1452	
ffor-pynynd what for wo & for distresse		
Who feleth double sorwe & heynesse		V. 3.
But palamoun þat loue distreynyth so		
That wod of hese wit he goth for wo	1456	
And ek þerto he is a presounner		
Perpetuelly not only for a 3er		
Who coude ryme in englys properly		
His marterdam for sothe it am <sup>1</sup> not I	[? 1 MS.] 1460	



I'herfore I passe as lyztely as I may		
It fel that in the seuynte 3er In may		
The thredde nyzt as olde bokys seyn		
That al this story tellyn more & pleyn	1464	
Were it by auenture or destene		
As whan a pyng is schapyn it schal be		
That sone aftyr the mydnyzt palamoun		V. 25-7.
Be helpyng of a frend brak hese presoun	1468	
And fleth the cete faste as he may go		[leaf 152]
ffor he hadde 3ouyn hese gayler dronkyn so		V. 24.
Of a clarre mad of certeyn wyn		
With nertotikes & opie of Thebes fyn	1472	
That al that nyzt though þat men wolde hym schake		
The gayler slep he myzte not wake		
And þus he fleth as faste as euere he may		
The nyzt was schort & faste by the day	1476	
That nedis cost / he muste hym seluyn hide		
And tyl a groue faste þere besyde		V. 33.
With dredful fot þanne stalkyth palamoun		
ffor schortely þis was hese opynnyoun	1480	
That in þat groue he muste hym hide alday		
And in the nyzt þanne wolde he take his way		
To thebes-ward hese frendis for to preye		
On Thesyus to helpe hym for to werye	1484	
And schortly oper he wolde lese <sup>1</sup> hese lyf		[1 ? MS. lefe]
Or wynnyn emelye vn-to hese wyf		
This is theffect & hese entente pleyn		
Now wele I turne vn-to Arcite ageyn	1488	
That lityl wiste how nygh that was hese care		
Tyl þat fortune hadde brought hym in þat snare		
The besye larke messenger of the day		
Salueth in here song the morwe gray	1492	
And fery phebus ryseth vp so bryght		
That al the oryent laugheeth of þ <sup>e</sup> lyght		
And with hese stremys dreyeth in þ <sup>e</sup> greuys		
The syluere dropis hangynge in the leuys	1496	

And arcita that is in þ<sup>e</sup> court royal  
 With Theseus is squyer pryncypal  
 Is resyn & lokyth on the merye day  
 And for to don hese obseruance to may 1500  
 Remembrynge on the poynt of hese desyr  
 He on a courser stertelynge as the fyr  
 Is redyn in to þ<sup>e</sup> feldis hym to pleye  
 Out of the court were it a myle or tweye 1504  
 And to þ<sup>e</sup> grene of wheche þat I ȝow tolde [leaf 152, back]  
 By auenture his weye he gan to holde  
 To make hym a garlond of the greuys | IV. 62.  
 Were it of wode-bynde or hawethorn leuys 1508  
 And loude he song a-ȝen the sunne schene  
 May with alle thynne flourys & thynne grene  
 Welcome be þou fayre frosche may  
 In hope þat I sum grene getyn may 1512  
 And from hese courser with a lusty herte  
 In-to the greue<sup>1</sup> ful hastyleche he sterte [1 MS. altered]  
 And in a path he romede vp & down  
 There as be auenture this palamoun 1516  
 Was In a bosch that no man myȝte hym se  
 ffor sore ofered of hese death was he  
 Ne þyng ne knewe he that it was arcit  
 God wot he wolde a trowed it ful lite 1520  
 But soth is seyð gon sithe manye ȝerys  
 That þe feld hath eyen & þe wode hath erys  
 It is ful fayr a man to bere hym euene  
 ffor al day metiþ men at vnset<sup>2</sup> stevene [2nset: later] 1524  
 fful lityl wot arcyte of hese felawe  
 That was so nygh to heryn of hese tale  
 ffor in the bosch he sittyth now ful styлле  
 Whan þat Arcite hadde romede al hese fylle 1528  
 And sungyn al the roundele lustyly  
 In-to a stodye he fel sodeynly  
 As don þese louerys in here queynte geres  
 Now in the crop now down in the brerys 1532

Now vp now doun as boket in a well		
Ryȝt as the fryday sothly for to telle		
Now it schynyth now it reynyth faste		
Ryȝt so can gery venus ouercaste	1536	
The hertys of here folk ryȝt as here ȝe <sup>1</sup> may	[1 ȝe ma: later]	
Is gerful ryȝt so chaungith sche aray		
Selde is the fryday al the wouke lyk		
Whanne that Areyte hadde sunge he gan to sik	1540	
And sette hym doun with-outyn ony more	[leaf 153]	
Allas <i>quod</i> he that day þat I was bore		
How longe Iuno thorw þyn crewelte		
Wiltow werreyen Thebes the sete	1544	
Allas I-brouȝt is to confusioun		See IV. 13, 14
The blod royal of Cadme & amphioun		
Of Cadme wich þat was þ <sup>e</sup> ferste man		
That Thebes beelte <sup>2</sup> / or fyrst þ <sup>e</sup> toun began	[2 ee: later]	1548
And of the Sete fyrst was crounnede kyng		
Of hese lynage was I / and hese of-spryng		
By verray lyne / as of the stok royal		• See IV. 31.
And now I am so kaytif & so thral	1552	•
That he that is myn mortal enemy		See IV. 85.
I serue hym as hese squyer purely		
And ȝit doth Iuno me more schame		
ffor I dare not beknowe myn owene name	1556	
There as I was wone to hyȝte areyte		• See IV. 84.
Now highte I philostrate not worth a myȝte		• [Pentec, IV. 84.]
Allas þou felle Mars allas Iuno		See IV. 17.
Thus hath ȝoure yre oure lynege fordo	1560	
Saue only me wrechede Palamoun		
That Thesyus marteryth in presoun		
And oueral þis to slen me vttyrly		IV. 82.
Loue hath hese fery darte so breynnyngely	1564	
I-stekid þour myn trewe carful herte		
That schapyn was myn deþ er þan myn scherte		
ȝe slen me with ȝoure eyen emelye		
ȝe ben the cause wherfore that I deye	1568	

Of al the remenaunt of myn oþer care  
 Ne sette I not the mountenauns of a tare  
 So þat I coude don ouzt to ȝoure plesaunse  
 And with þat word he fyl down in a traunce 1572  
 A long tyme & aftyrward he vp styrt  
 This palamoun þat thoute þat thorw hese herte  
 He felte a cold swerd sodeynliche glyde  
 ffor yre he quok / no lengere wolde he byde 1576  
 And whan þat he hadde herd Arcytis tale [leaf 153, back]  
 As hewere wod with face ded and pale  
 He styrt hym vp out of the boschis pikke  
 And seyde arcite false traytour wikke 1580  
 Now art þou hent þat louyst myn lady so  
 for whom þat I haue al þis peyne and wo  
 And art myn blod & to myn conseyl sworn  
 As I ful oftyn haue seyd þe here be-forn 1584  
 And hast beiapid here deuk Thesyus  
 And falsely chaunged þyn name thus  
 I wele ben ded or ellys þou schat deye  
 þou schat not loue myn lady Emalye 1588  
 But I wele loue here only & no mo  
 ffor I am palamoun þyn mortal fo  
 And þow þat I no wepene haue in þis place  
 But out of prisoun am styrt by grace 1592  
 I drede not þat outhur þou schat deye  
 Or þou ne schat not louyn emalye  
 Ches which þou wit or þou schat not asterte  
 This Arcyte with ful dispitous herte 1596  
 Whan he hym knew & hadde hese tale herd  
 As fers as lyoun pullede out a swerd  
 And seyde þus bi god that set a-boue  
 Nere it þat þou art sek & wod for loue 1600  
 And ek for þou no wepen hast in þis place  
 Thow schuldist neuere out of þis grene pase  
 That þou ne schuldist deyen of myn hond  
 ffor I defie the surete & the bond\* [ \* See p. 25, n. 5.] 1604 | v. 51.



Wiche þat þou seyst þat I haue mad to þe		<u>Teseide.</u>
What veray fol þink wel that loue is fre		V. 61.
And I wele loue here maugre al þyn myȝt		
But for as meche þou art a worthy knyȝt	1608	
And wilnyst to darrayne here be batayle		
Haue here myn trouthe to-morwe I nyl not fayle		
With-oute wetynge of ony oþer whicht		
That here I wele be foundyn as a knyght	1612	
And bryngyn harneys ryȝt I-now for the	[leaf 154]	
And ches the best & lef the werste to me		
And mete and drynk þis nyȝt wele I brynge		
I-nough for þ <sup>e</sup> & clothis for þyn beddyng	1616	
And ȝif so be þat þou myn lady wynne		
And sle me in þis wode þere I am inne		
þou mayst wel han þyn lady as for me		
This palamoun answerde I graunte it the	1620	
And þus þey be toparted til a morwe		
Whan eche of hem hadde leyd hese feyth to borwe		
O cupide out of alle charite		
O regne that wolde no felawe han with the	1624	
fful soth is it seyð that loue and lordschep		. V. 13.
Wolde not hese þankys han no felauschep		.
Wel fyndy þat arcite and palamoun		
Arcite is rydyn anon in to þe toun	1628	
And on þ <sup>e</sup> morwyn er it were day lyȝt		
fful fynly to harneys haþ he dyȝt		
Bothe sufficiaunt & mete to darreeyne		
The batayle in the feld be-tweixe hem tweyne	1632	
And on hese horse alone as he was born		
He caryeth al þis harneys hym be-forn		
And in the groue at tyme & place I-set		
This arcite & þis palamo[n] ben met	1636	
To chaunge gan the colour in here face		
Rygh as the hunterys in the regn <sup>e</sup> of trace		
That stondiþ at the gap with a spere		VIL 106.
Whan huntede is the lyoun or the bere	1640	

An herith hym come russchyng in the greuys  
 And brekith boþe the bowis & the leuys  
 And þynkyth here comyth myn mortal enemy  
 With-oute fayle he mote be ded or I 1644  
 ffor eyþer I mote slen hym at the gap  
 Or he slen me ȝif that me mys hap  
 So ferdyn þey in chaungyng of here hewe  
 As fer as eueryche of hem oþer knewe 1648  
 Ther nas no good day ne no saluynge [leaf 154, back]  
 But streyt with-oute word or rehersyng  
 Eueryche of hem halp for to arme oþer  
 As frendly as he were hese owene brothyr 1652  
 And aftyr þat with scharpe sperys stronge  
 They foynedyn eche at oþer wondyr longe  
 Thow myȝtist wene þat þis palamoun  
 In hese fyȝt were a wood lyoun 1656  
 And as a cruel tygre was arcite  
 As wilde borys gunne þey to smyte  
 That frothyn white as fom for yre wod  
 Vp to the anches foute þey in here blod 1660  
 And in this wyse lete I hem fyghtyng dwelle  
 And forth I wele of thesyrus ȝow telle  
 The destenye mynystere general • VI. 1.  
 That executyth in the world oueral 1664  
 The puruyauns þat god hath seyn be-forn\* [\* See p. 25, n. 6.]  
 So strong it is þat thow þe world hadde sworn  
 The contrarye of a thyng be ȝa or nay  
 ȝit sumtyme it schal fallyn on a day 1668 • V. 77.  
 That fallyth not eft with inne a thousent ȝere  
 ffor certeynly oure aspectis here  
 Be it of werre or pes or hate or loue  
 Al is þis reuled be the sizte a-boue 1672  
 This mene I now be myȝty thesyrus | V. 77  
 That for to huntyn is so desirous  
 And namely at the grete hert in may  
 That in hese bed þere dawede hym no day 1676

That he nys clad & redy for to ryde		<i>Testide.</i>
With hunte & horn & houndis hym besyde		V. 77.
ffor in hese huntynge hath he swych delyȝt		V. 78.
That it is al hese Ioye & apetyt	1680	
To ben hym self the grete hertys bane		
ffor ofte mars he seruyth now dyane		
Cler was þe day as I haue told or this		
And Thesysus <i>with</i> alle Ioye & blys	[leaf 155]	
With hese ypolita the fayre quene		
And Emale clothed al in grene		[See XII. 65.]
On huntynge be þey redyn really		
And to the groue stod ful faste by	1688	
In wech there was an hert as men him tolde		
Deuk thesysus þ <sup>e</sup> ryȝte weye hath holde		
And to the launde he rydith hym ful ryȝt		
ffor there was the hert wone to have his flyȝt	1692	
And ouer a brok & so forth on hese weye		
This deuk wele han a cours with hym or tweye		
With houndis which as hym lyste comaunde		
And whan This deuk was comyn vn-to þ <sup>e</sup> launde	1696	
Vndir the sunne he lokyth & þat a-non		
He was war of Arcite & Palamon		
That foutyn breame as it were boris too		
The bryȝte swerdis wentyn to & fro	1700	
So hidously that with the leste strok		
It semede as it wolde felle an ok		
But what þey were no þyng he ne wot		
This deuk hese courser <i>with</i> the sporys smot	1704	V. 82.
And at a stert he was be-twixe hem too		
And pulle out a swerd & cryede hoo		
No more vp payne of lesynge of ȝoure hed		
Be myghti mars he schal a-non be ded	1708	
That smyth ony strok that I may sen		
But telle me what myster men ȝe ben		V. 83.
That ben so hardy for to fytyn here		
With-outyn lūge or oþer offiser	1712	

As it were in a listis ryaly  
 This Palamon answerde hastily  
 And seyde sere what nedith wordis mo  
 We haue the deth deseruyd bothe two 1716  
 Two woful wrechis ben we two caytyuys  
 That ben encomberit of oure owene lyuys  
 And as þou art a ryztful lord & Iuge  
 Ne ȝif vs neythir mercy ne refuge 1720  
 But sle me ferst for seynte charite [leaf 155, back]  
 But sle myn felawe ek as wel as me  
 Or sle hym ferst for þow þou knowist it lyte  
 He is þyn dedly enemy areyte 1724  
 That fro þyn lond is banysschid on his hed  
 ffor which he hath [de]seruyd to ben ded  
 ffor this is he that come on to þyn ȝate  
 And seyde that he hyte philostrate 1728  
 Thus hath he Iapid þ<sup>e</sup> ful manye a ȝer  
 And þow hast makid hym þyn squyer  
 And this is he that louyth Emelye  
 ffor sithe the day is come that I schal deye 1732  
 I make pleyn myn confessioun  
 That I am thilke woful Palamoun  
 That hath thyn presoun broke wekedel  
 I am thi mortal fo / & it am I 1736  
 That louyth so hote Emalia the bryȝte  
 That I wele deye present in here syȝte  
 Wherfore I aske deth & myn Iu-wise  
 But sle myn felawe in the same wise 1740  
 ffor bothe haue we disseruyd to ben slayn  
 This worthi deuk answerde anon agayn  
 And seyde þis is a schort conclusioun  
 ȝoure owene mouth be ȝoure confessioun 1744  
 Hath dampned ȝow & I wele it recorde  
 It nedith not to pyne ȝow with the corde  
 ȝe schul be ded be myȝty mars the rede  
 The quene a-non for veray woman-hede 1748

See V. 91.

See V. 91.

V. 90.



Gan for to wepe & so dede emelye  
 And alle the ladyis in the cumpanye  
 Gret pete was it as it thoughte hem alle  
 That euere swich a chaunse schulde falle 1752  
 ffor gentil men þey were of gret estat  
 And noþyng but for loue was this debat  
 And saw here bloody woundis wide & sore  
 And alle criedyn both lasse & more 1756  
 Haue merci lord 'vpon vs wemen alle [leaf 156]  
 And on here bare kneis adoun þey falle [1 v: later]  
 And wilde a kissede hese fet þere as he stod  
 Til at the laste a-slakede was hese mod 1760  
 ffor pete rennyt sone in gentil herte  
 And though he ferst for yre quok & sterte  
 he hath consideryd schortely in a clause  
 The trespass of hem bothe & ek the cause<sup>2</sup> [\* chauce: altered]  
 And al-thow that hese yre hese gilt acused 1765  
 3it in hese resoun he hem bothe excused  
 As thus he thouthe wel that euery man  
 Wele helpe hym selve in loue 3if that he can 1768  
 And delyuere hym self 3if that he moun<sup>3</sup> [\* moun: later]  
 And ek hese herte hade compassioun  
 Of wemen for þey wepyn euere in on  
 And in hese gentil herte he thou3te a-non 1772  
 And softe to hym self he seyde fy  
 Vpon a lord that wele haue no mercy  
 But byn a lyoun bothe in word & dede  
 To hem that ben in repentaunt & drede 1776  
 As wel as to a proud dispitous man  
 That wele meyntene that he ferst began  
 That lord hath lityl discrecioun  
 That in swich cas hath no dyuysioun 1780  
 But weyeth pride & humblesse aftyr on  
 And schortly whan hese yre is þus agon  
 He gan to lokyn vp with ey3yn ly3te  
 And spak these same wordis alle on hy3te 1784

The god of loue a benedicite		
How myghti & how gret a lord is he		
A-ȝens hese myȝt þere geynyth none obstakett		
He may be clepid a god for hese myrakett	1788	
ffor he can makyn at hese owene gyse		
Of eneryche herte as he leste deuyse		
Lo here þis arcite & þis Palamoun		
That quyte weryn out of presoun	1792	
And myȝtyn a leuyd in thebes really	[leaf 156, back]	
And wetyn I am here mortal enemy		
And that here deth lyth in myn myȝt also		
And ȝit hath loue maugry here eyȝyn two	1796	
Brought hem hedyr bothe for to deye		
Now lokith is not this an hey folye		
Who may ben a fol but ȝif he loue		
Behold for godis sake that sit a-boue	1800	
Se how þey blede be þey not wel arayed		
Thus hath here lord the god of loue hem payed		
Here wagis & here feis for here seruise		
And ȝit þey wene for to ben ful wyse	1804	
That sey <sup>th</sup> loue for ouȝt that may be-falle		
But þis is ȝit the beste gise of alle		
That sen for whom they han this iolyte		
Kan hem therfore as meche thank as me	1808	
Sche wot no more of al this hote fare		
By god than wot a kokkow or an hare		
But al mote ben asayed hot or cold		
A man mot nede ben a fol or ȝong or old	1812	V. 92.
I wote it be myn self ful ȝore agon		
ffor in myn tyme a seruau <sup>n</sup> t was I on		
And þerfore syn I knowe of loue peyne		
And wot how sore it can a man distreyne	1816	
As he that hath ofte be cauȝt in his las		
I ȝow for-ȝeue al holy this trespas		V. 92-3.
At request of the quen that knelith here		
And ek of emalye myn systir dere	1820	

And 3e schul bothe a-non vn-to me swere		<i>Tesside.</i>
That neuere mo 3e schul myn cuntre dere		
Ne mak werre vp-on me nyzt ne day		
But ben mynne frendys in al that 3e may	1824	
I 3ow for-3eue þis trespas euerydel		
And þey hym sworyn hise axinge fayre & wel		V. 93.
And hym of lordschepe & of mercy preyede		
And he hem grauntede grace & þus he seyde	1828	
To speke of ryal lynage & of rychesse	[leaf 157]	V. 94.
Thow that sche were a quen or a princesse		
Eche of 3ow bothe is worthi douteles		
To weddyn whan tyme is / but neuer the les	1832	
I speke as for myn sustyr Emalye		
ffor whom 3e han þis stryf of Ielousye		
3e wote 3oure self sche may not wedde two		V. 95.
At onys þey 3e fyzte euere mo	1836	
To on of 3ow / al be hym loth or lef		
He mote go pipe in an yuy lef		
This is to seyn sche may not now han bothe		
Al be 3e neuere so Ielous ne so wrothe	1840	
And for-thi I 3ow putte in þis degre		
That eche of yow schal han hese destene		
As hym is schapyn & herkenyth in what wyse		
Lo here 3oure ende of that I schal 3ow deuyse	1844	
Myn wil is this for plat conclusioun		
With-outyn ony replicacyoun		
3if that 3ow likyth tak it for the beste		
That eueryche of 3ow schal gon ryzt were hym leste	1848	
ffrely with-oute raunsum or daunger		
And þis day fifty woukis fer & ner		'un anno intero,
Eueryche of 3ow schal brynge an hunderit knyghtis		V. 93.
Armyd for lystis vp at alle ryghtis	1852	V. 97.
Al redy to darrayne here by batayle		'nel teatro nostro.
And this be-hote I 3ow with-outyn fayle		
Vp on myn trouthe & as I am a knyzt		
That whethir of 3ow bothe that hath myght	1856	

54 GROUP A. § 2. KNIGHT'S TALE. Cambridge MS.

This is to seyne that wheþer he or þou May with hese hunderede as I spak of now Sle hese contrarye or out of lystis dryue Than schal I ȝeue Emalye to wyue	1860	<i>Teseide.</i> V. 98. [no slaying mentioned.]
To whom that fortune ȝeuyth so fayr a grace The lystis schal I make ryȝt here in þis plase And god so wisely on myn soule rewe That I schal euene Iuge ben & trewe	1864	
Ȝe schul non oper ende with me make That on of ȝow schal be ded or take And ȝif ȝow þynkith þis is wel I-sayd Seyth ȝoure auys and holdith ȝow apayed	1868	[leaf 157, back]
This is ȝoure ende & ȝoure conclusyoun Who lokyth lyȝtely now but palamoun Who spryngyth vp for Ioye but arcite Who couthe telle or who couthe endite	1872	
The Ioye that is now schewid in the place Whan Thesius hath / don so fayr a grace But doun on kneis wente euery man[er] wiȝt And þankede hym with al here herte & myȝt	1876	[tanta grazia, V. 100.]
And nameliche the thebens ofte sythe And þus with god hope & with herte blythe They take here leue & homward þey gunne ryde To Thebes with olde wallys wyde	1880	

[PART III. No gap in the MS.]

I trowe men wolde it deme necligence Ȝif I for-ȝete to telle þ <sup>e</sup> dispence Of Thesius that goth so besily To makyn vp the listis ryally	1884	the lystis
That swich a noble theatre as it was I dar wel seyn in this world þere nas The Cyrcuyt a myle was aboute Wallyd of ston & dychid al with-oute Round was the schap in maner of cumpas	1888	• VI. 108. • [no ditch.] .



fful of degreis the hey3te of sixty pas		<i>Teseide.</i>
That whan a man was set on a degre		VII. 119.
He lettyth not his felawe for to se	1892	
Estward þere stod a gate of marbil whit		Porta Marmoris VII. 119.
Westward swich a noþer in the opposit		. I. ex opposito
And schortly for to conclude swich a place		
Was non in erthe of so lytil space	1896	
ffor in the lond þere nas no crafty man		
That iemetrye or arsmetrik can		
Ne portretour ne keruere of ymagis		
That Thesys hym 3af mete & wagis	1900	
The theatre for to makyn & deuyse	[leaf 158]	
And for to don his ryte & sacryfise		
He est-ward hath vp on the gate a-boue		
In worschepe of venus goddesse of loue	Venus	
Don make an auter & an oratorye	1905	
And on the westward in memorye		
Of mars he makyd hat ry3t swich a noþer	Mars	
That coste of gold largely a fother	1908	
And norward in a toret of the wal		
Of alabastre whit & red coral		
An oratorye ryche for to se		
In worschepe of Diane of chastite	Dyane	
Hath Thesius don wrou3t in noble wise	1913	
But 3it hadde I for3etyn to deuyse		
The noble keruyng & the portreyture		
The schap the contenance & the fygure	1916	
That weryn in these oratoryis thre		
ffyrst in the temple of venus mayst þou se		
Wrou3t on the wal ful pitous to be-hold		
The brokene slepis & the sikys colde	1920	
The secret terys & þe waymentyng		
The fery strokys of the desyryng		VII. 52.
That louys seruauentyis of this lyf enduren		
The Cothis that here couenauntys assuryen	1924	
Plesaunce hope desyr folhardynesse		See VII. 55-6. &c.

Beute & ȝouthe baudrie richesse			<i>Tescide.</i>
Charmys & force lesynge & flaterye			See VII. 56, & 64
Dispence besynesse & Ielousye	1928		See VII. 55-6, 59.
That werede of ȝelwe flourys a garlond			
And a cokkow sittynge on hese hand			
ffestis instrumentis karolys daunsis			See VII. 53, & 57
lust & aray & alle þe circumstancis	1932		
Of loue whiche that I reken & rekne schal			
Be ordere were peyntid on the wal			
And mo þan I can make of mencyoun			
ffor sothly al the mount of Cytheroun	1936		VII. 50.
There venus hath hese pryncipal dwellyng		[leaf 158, back]	
Was schewid in the wal in portreyng*		[* See p. 25, n. 7.]	
With al the gardyn & the besynesse			
Not was forȝetyn the portyr ydilnesse †	1940	[† See p. 25, n. 8.]	
Ne narcyus the fayre of ȝore a-gon			
And ȝit the folye of kyng salamon			
And ek the grete strenthe of ercules ‡		[‡ See p. 25, n. 7.]	
Thenchautementz of Media / & Circes	1944		
Ne of Turnes / with the hardy ferce corage			
The ryche Cresus caytyf in seruage			
Thus may ȝe sen that wisdam ne rychesse			
Beute ne sleythe strenthe ne hardynesse	1948		
Ne may with wenus holde champardye			
ffor as here lust the world þanne may sche gye			
Lo alle these folk so cauȝt were in here lase			
Til they for wo ful ofte seyde allas	1952		
Suffyseth here ensaumplys on or to			
And þow I couthe rekene a thousent mo			
The statue of Venus gloryous for to se §		[§ See p. 25, n. 9.]	Venus
Was makyd fletynge in the large se	1956		
And from the nauelle doun al couered was			
Which was grene & bryȝt as ony glas			
A Cythole in here ryȝt hand hadde sche			
And on here hed so semely for to se	1960		
A rose garlond frosch & wel smellynge			

A-boue here hed here douznys flekerynge	
By-forn here stod here sone cupido <sup>1</sup>	[ <sup>1</sup> a second o added; later]
Vp-on hese schulderys wyngis hadde he to <sup>1</sup>	1964
And blynd he was as it is ofte sene	
A bowe he bar & arwys bryzte & kene	
Whi schulde I not as wel telle 3ow al	
The portreyture that was vp-on þ <sup>e</sup> wal	1968
With-inne the wal of myzty mars the rede	[Mars]
Al peyntid was the wal in lenthe & brede	• VII. 36.
Lyk to the Estrys of the gresely place	VII. 29, 30.
That hyzte the grete temple of Mars in Trace	1972
In tylke colde frosty regyoun	[leaf 109]
Ther as Mars hath hese sonereyne maneyoun	
ffyrst on the wal was peynted a forest	• VII. 31.
In whiche þere dwellith neyper man ne beste	1976
With knotty knarry bareyne treis olde	• [but a real forest there, not a painted one.]
Of stubbis scharpe and hidous to beholde	
In whiche þerein ran a rumbil in a swogh	•
As þow a storm schulde brestyn euery bowgh	1980
And down from an hyl vndyr a bente	
There stod the temple of Mars armypotente	• VII. 32.
Wrougt al of bornede stel of wheche thentre	•
Was long & stryt and gastely for to se	1984
And ther-out come a rage in swich a wese	• VII. 33.
That it made al the gate for to rese	•
The northren light In at the dorys shon*	[* See p. 25, n. 10.]
ffor wyndow on the wal was there non	1988
Thorw whiche men myghte ony lyth discerne	
The doris were ale of athamanutz eterne	• VII. 32.
I-clenchede ouerthwert & endelong	•
With yryn tough & for to make it strong	1992
Euery peler the temple to susteyne	• VII. 33.
Was tunne gret of yryn bryzt & schene	•
There saugh I fyrst the derke ymagynyng	•
Of felonye and the compassyng	1996
The crewel yre red as ony glede	•

The pike-purs & the pale drede		• <i>Teseide.</i>
The smylere with the knyf vndyr the cloke		• VII. 33. [not the pickpurse.]
The shepne brennyng <i>with</i> the blake smoke	2000	• VII. 34.
The tresoun & the morderyng in the bed		
The opene werre <i>with</i> woundis al be-bled		
Contek with bloody knyf & scharp manace		• VII. 34.
Al ful of chyrkyng was that sory place	2004	•
The sloere of <i>hym</i> self 3it saw I þere		
Hese herte blod hath bathed al hese here		
The nayl I-dreue in the schod a nyzt		
The colde deth with mouth gapyng vp ryght	2008	
In myddis of the temple there sat myschaunce *	[leaf 159, back] [* See p. 25, n. 11.]	
With discomfort & sory cuntenauns		
3it saw I wodnesse laughyng in hese rage		VII. 35.
Armyd compleynt / outes & fers corage†	[† See p. 25, n. 12.] 2012	
The careyn in the bosch with throte I-korwe		
A thousent slayn & not of qualm I-storve		
The tyraunt with the pray by forse I-raft		
The toun distroyed there was no þyng laft	2016	VII. 36.
3it saw I brent the schepis hospesterys ‡	[‡ See p. 25, n. 13.]	
The hunte strangede with the wilde berys		
The sowe fretyn the child ryzt in þ <sup>e</sup> cradil		
The cook I-skaldit for al hese longe ladil	2020	
Nouzt was for-3etyn by the infortune of marthe		
The cartere ouyr redyn with hese carte		VII. 37
Vndir the whil ful lowe lay he a-doun		
There were also of martyrs dyvysioun	2024	
The labourer the bocher & the smyth		
That forgyth scharpe swerdis on the steyth		
And al a-boute depeyntid in a tour		
Saw I conquest sittyng in gret honour	2028	
With the scharpe swerd ouyr his hed		
Hangyng by a sotyl twynede thred		
Depeyntid was the slautre of Iulyus		
Of grete nero & of antonyus	2032	
Al be that ilke tyme they were onborn		



3it was here deth depeyntid *pere* be-forn  
 By manasyng of mars ryȝt by fygure  
 So was it schewid in that portreture 2036  
 As is depeyntid in the sertres above  
 Who schal be slayn or elle ded for loue  
 Suffiseth on ensaumples in storyis olde  
 I may not rekene hem thow I wolde 2040  
 The statue of mars vp-on a carte stod  
 Armyd & lokede grym as he were wod  
 And ouer hese hed *pere* schynyn two figurys  
 Of storyis þat ben clepid in scripturys 2044  
 That on puella that othir Rubeus  
 [leaf 160]  
 This god of armys was arayed thus  
 A wolf there stod be-forn hym at hese fet  
 With eyȝyn rede & of a man he et 2048  
 With sotyl pensel was depeyntid þis story  
 In redoutyng of mars & of hese glory  
 Now to the temple of dyane the chaste  
 Dyane  
 As shortly as I can I wele me haste 2052  
 To telle ȝow al the discripcioun  
 Depeyntid ben the walle vp & doun  
 Of huntyng & of schamfast schastite  
 Ther saw I how woful Calistope 2056  
 Whan that dyane agreuyd was *with* here  
 Was turnyd *from* a woman til a bere  
 And after was sche mad the lode sterre  
 That shynyth in the hevyn / from yow so ferre [whole line later]  
 Here sone is ek a sterre as men may se  
 There saw I dane I-turnede til a tre  
 I mene not the goddesse dyane  
 But Pennyus douȝtyr whiche that hyȝte dane 2064  
 There saw I. Attheon / an hert I-makid  
 ffor vengauunce that he saw dyane al nakyd  
 I saw how that hese houndis han hym caut  
 And fretyn hym for that þey knewe hym not 2068  
 3it peyntid was a lityl *ferpere* more

How atthalaunte huntid þe wilde bore  
 And Melyagre & manye a-noþer mo  
 ffor whiche diane wrouzte hym care & wo 2072  
 There saw I manye a-noþer wondir story  
 The wheche me lyste not drawe to memory  
 This goddesse on an hart<sup>1</sup> / wol hye set [1 art nearly erased]  
 With smale hundys / al aboute here fet 2076  
 And vndirnethe here fet / sche hadde a mone  
 Waxinge it was & schulde wanye sone  
 In gaude grene here statue clothede was  
 With bowe in hond & arwis in a cas 2080  
 Here eyzyn caste sche / ful lowe adoun [leaf 160, back]  
 Ther pluto hath / here derke regioun  
 A woman trauaylynge / hadde sche be-forn  
 But for here child / so longe was on-born 2084  
 fful pitusly lucyane gan sche calle  
 And seyde help for þou mayst best of alle  
 Wel coude he peynte lyfly that it wrouzte  
 With manye a floreyne / heye it was bouzte 2088  
 Now ben these lystis / made & thesyus  
 That at hese grete cost arayed þus  
 The temple & the theatre euerydel  
 Whan it was don / it likede hym wondyr wel 2092  
 But stynte I wele of Thesyus a lyte  
 And speke of Palamoun & [of] Arcite  
 The day a-prochith of here returnynge  
 That eueryche schulde an hunderit knyztis brynge 2096  
 The batayle to darrayn as I 3ou tolde  
 And to atenys here couenaunt for to holde  
 Hath eueryche of hem brouzt an hunderit knyztis  
 Wel armede for to werre at alle ryztis 2100  
 And sekyrly þere trowede manye a man  
 That neuere sithe that the world be-gan  
 As for to spe[ke] of knyght-hod of here hond  
 As fer as god hath makyd se & sond 2104  
 Nas of so fewe so noble a cumpany

Teseide.

VL 71.

VL 71.

ffor euery wyȝt that louede chyualry		<i>Teseide.</i>
And wolde hese þank han a passaunt name		
Hath preyed that he myȝte ben of that game	2108	'giuoco,' VII. 4
And wel was hym that þerto schosyn was		
ffor ȝif there fel to-morwe swich a cas		
Ȝe knowe wel that euery lusty knyȝt		
Th[a]t lounȝth paramouris & hath hese myȝt	2112	
Were it in yngelond or ellys where		
They wolden here thankys willyn to be there		
To fyghtyn for a lady benedicite		
It were a lusty syȝte for to se	2116	
And ryȝt so ferdyn þey with Palamoun	[leaf 161]	
With hym þere wentyn knyghtys manye on		
Some wele ben armede in an habirioun		
And in a brest plate & in a lyȝt Iopoun	2120	
And some wele haue a peyre platys large		
And some wele haue a pruce schild or a targe		
Some wele ben armyd on hese leggys wel		
And han an ax & some a mace of stel	2124	
There is non newe gyse that it nas old		
Armede were þey as I haue ȝow told		
Eueryche after hese opynyoun		
Ther mayst þou sen / comynge with palamoun	2128	[on Arcita's side, Tese.]
Ligurge hym selue / the grete kyng of trace		• VI. 14.
Blak was hese berd / & manlyche was hese face		VI. 21. (See p. 26, n. 14.)
The Cerkelys of hese eyen / in hese hed		
They glowedyn / by-twethyn ȝelw & red	2132	
And lyk a grefoun lokede he a-boute		
With kempe herys on hese browys stoute		
His lemys grete / hese brawnys grete & stronge		• VI. 21.
Hese schuderys brode hese armys rounde & longe	2136	
And as the gyse was in his cuntre		
fful heye vp on a char of gold stod he		• VI. 21.
With foure white bolys in the trays		
In stede of hese cote armour ouer hese harneys	2140	• VI. 22
With naylys ȝelwe & bryghte as ony gold		•

He hadde a berys skyn / cole blak for old		• <i>Teseide.</i>
Hese longe her was kemb be-hynde his bak		VI. 22.
As ony rauenyis fedyr it schon for blak	2144	
A wrethe of gold / arm gret of heuge weighte		
Vp-on hese hed set ful of stonyis bryghte		
Of fynne rubeis & of dyamauntys		
A-boute hese char there wente why <sup>3</sup> te Alauntis	2148	
Twenty & mo as grete as ony ster		
To huntyn at the lyoun or the der		
And folwede hym with mosel faste I-bounde		
Colerid of gold / & torettys fylede rounde	2152	
An hunderit lordis hadde he in hese route	(leaf 161, back	
Armede ful wel with hertis sterne & stoute		
With arcyta in storyis as men fynde		
The grete emetreus the kyng of Inde	2156	
Vp-on a stede bay trappit in stel		
Couered in cloth of gold diapyrd wel		• VI. 20. (See r. 25, n. 15.)
Come rydynghe liik the god of armys mars		
Hese cote armeure was of cloth of taris	2160	
Couchede with perlys white & rounde & grete		
Hese sadil was of brend gold newe bete		VI. 17.
A mantyl vp-on hese schuld <sup>as</sup> dyr hangynghe		VI. 16.
Bret ful of Rubyis rede & fer sparkelynghe	2164	
Hese crispe her lyk ryngis was I-roune		
And pat was 3elw / & glederit as the sonne		
Hese nose was hey hese ey <sup>3</sup> yn bryght sitryne		
Hese lyppis rounde hese colour was sanguyn	2168	
A fewe frakenys in hese face I-sprend		
Be-twixe 3elw / & sumdel blak I-meynd		
And as a lyoun he hese lokynghe caste		
Of fyue & twenty 3er / hese age I caste	2172	
Hese berd was wel begunne for to sprynghe		
Hese voys was as a trumpe thonderynghe		
Vp-on hese hed he werede a laurer grene		VI. 41.
A garlond frosch & lusti for to seene	2176	
Vp-on hese hond he bar for hes deduyt		



An egle tame as ony lylve whit		
An hunderid lordys hadde he with hym there		
Alle armede sone / here hedis in al here gere	2180	
ful rychely in alle maner thyngis		
ffor trustyth wel that dukis erlys kyngis		VI. 65.
Were gaderid in this noble cumpanye		
ffor loue & for eneres of chiwalrye	2184	
A-bouthe this kyng / there ran on euery part		
ful manye a tame / lyoun & lebard		
And in this wise / these lordis alle & some		
Ben on the soneday / to the sete come	2188	
Aboute prime & in the toun a-light	(leaf 162)	
This thesyus this deuk this worthi knyght		VI. 65.
Whanne he hadde brouȝt hem in-to hese cete		
And innode hem / euerych at hese degre	2192	
He festith hem / & doth so gret labour		
To esyn hem / & don hem alle honour		
That ȝit men wenyn / that no mannys wit		
Of non estat / ne coude amendyn it	2196	
The menstralcye / the seruyse at the feste		VI. 66-70.
The grete ȝiftys to the meste & leste		
The ryche aray of thesyus palays		
Ne ho sat ferst or last vp-on the deys	2200	
What ladyis fayrest ben or best daunsynge		
Or whiche of hem can daunsyn best or synge		VI. 70.
Ne who most felyngely / spekyth of loue		
What haukys syttyn on the perche a-boue	2204	VI. 8.
What houndys liggyn in the flor adoun		
Of al this make I now no mencyoun		
But al theeffect that pynkyth me the beste		
Now comyth the poynt / & herkenyth ȝif ȝow lyste	2208	
The soneday nyȝt er day be-gan to spyng		
Whan palamoun The larke herde synge		
Al-þey it were nought / day be ourys to		
ȝit song the larke / & palamoun also		palamoun to venus
With holy herte & with an hey corage	2213	

He ros to wendyn / on hese pilgrymage	
Vn-to the temple blysfyl Cythera benygne	
I mene venus honurable & dygne	2216
And in here hour he walkith forth a pas	
Vn-to the lystis there here temple was	
And doun he knelith & with vmble chere	
And herte sor / he seyde as 3e shal here	2220
ffayreste of fayre / O lady myn venus	
Doughtyr to loue / & spouse of Vleanus	. VII. 53.
Thow gladere of / the mount of Cytheroun	.
ffor thilke loue / þou haddyst to Adoun	2224 .
Haue pete of myne bittere teris smerte	[leaf 162, back] .
And tak myn humble preyere at þyn herte	
Allas I ne haue no langage to telle	. VII. 48.
Theffectis ne the turmentis of myn helle	2228 .
Myn herte may myn harm <sup>1</sup> not bewreyen	[ <sup>1</sup> arm: later]
I am so confus þat I can not seyen	. VII. 49.
But mercy lady brygh that knowyst wel	.
Myn thought & fest what harmys that I fel	2232 .
Considere al this & rew vp-on myn sor	
As wisely as I schal 3it eueremor	
Enforte myn myȝt thi trewe seruauunt be	
And holdyn werre alwey with chastite	2236
That make I myn owene so 3e me helpe	
I kepe not of armys for to 3elpe	. VII. 46.
Ne I ne axe not / to morwe to haue victorye	.
Ne renoun in this cas / ne ven glorie	2240 .
Of prys of armys blowyn vp & doun	.
But I wolde haue fully possessioun	.
Of Emelye & deye / in þyn seruyse	.
ffynd þou the maner how & in what wyse	2244 . VII. 47.
I reche not but I may betere be	.
To haue victorye of hem & þey of me	.
So that I haue myn lady in myne armys	.
ffor thow so be / that Mars I god of armys	2248
3oure vertu is so gret in heuene a-boue	

That ȝif þou lyst I schal wel haue myn loue		<i>Teseide.</i>
Thyn temple wele I worschepe euere mo		• VII. 48.
And on thyn auter where I ryde or go	2252	•
I wele don sacrifyse & ferys bete		•
And ȝif ȝe wele not so myn lady swete		• VII. 49.
Thanne prey I the to-morwe with a spere		•
That Arcitha / me þour the herte bere	2256	•
Than rekke I not whan I haue last myn lyf		•
Thow Arcithe / wyne here to hese wyf		•
This is theffect / & ende of myn preyere		
ȝyf me myn loue þou blysful lady dere	2260	
Whan þ <sup>e</sup> orysoun was don of palamoun	[leaf 163]	VII. 68.
Hese sacrifyse he dede & þat a-non		
fful pitously <i>with</i> al circumstaunce*	[* See p. 25, n. 16.]	
Al telle I not as now hese obseruaunce	2264	
But at the laste the statwe of Venus schok	Venus	
And made a sygne wherby that he tok		
That hese preyere acceptid was that day		
ffor though the sygne schewede a delay	2268	
þo wiste he wel þat grauntid was hese bone		
And with glad herte he wente hym hom ful sone		
The threde hour inequal that Palamoun		
Be-gan to Venus temple for to gon	2272	
Vp ros the sunne & vp ros Emalye	Emale	
And to the temple of dyane gan hye	Diane	
Here maydenys þat sehe thidir with her ladde		VII. 71.
fful redyly þ <sup>e</sup> fuyr <i>with</i> hem þey hadde	2276	
Thensens the clothis & the remenaunt al		
That to the sacrificse longyn schal		
The hornys ful of mete / as was the gyse		VII. 71.
Ther lakkede not to don here sacryfise	2280	
Smokyng þ <sup>e</sup> temple ful of clothis fayre		VII. 72.
This Emelye <i>with</i> herte debonayre <sup>1</sup>	[ <sup>1</sup> a altered from o]	
Here body wesch <i>with</i> watyr of a welle		VII. 72.
But how sche dede here ryte / I dar not telle	2284	
But ȝif it be ony þyng / in general		

And ȝit it were a game to here it al	
To hym that menyth wel / it were no charge	
But it is good a man be at hese large	2288
Here bryghte her was kempt vntrussed al	
A coroun of a grene ok cerial	• VII. 74.
Vp-on her hede was / set / ful fayre & mete	•
Too fyrys on the auter / gan sche bete	2292 •
And dede here thyngis as men may beholde	
In stace of Thebes & these bokys olde	
Whan kyndelit was this fuyr with pitous chere	• VII. 76.
Vn-to dyane sche spak / as ȝe may here	2296 •
O chaste goddesse of the wodys grene	[leaf 163, back] • VII. 79.
To whom bope heuene & erthe & se is sene	• VII. 77.
Quen of the regne / of pluto dirk and lowe	•
Goddesse of maydenys / þat myn herte hast knowe	2300 •
fful manye a ȝer and wost what I desire	
So kep me from þyn veniance & þyn yre	• VII. 79.
That attheon Aboughte crewelly	•
Chaste godesse wel wost þou that I	2304
Desire to ben a maydyn al myn lyf	
Ne neuere wele I be no loue ne wyf	
I am þou wost ȝit / of thyn compaygnye	• VII. 81.
A mayde & loue huntyng & venery	2308 •
And for to walkyn in the wodys wilde	•
And not to ben a wyf & ben with chylde	
Not wele I knowe compaynye of man	VII. 81.
Now help lady siþe ȝe may [& <sup>1</sup> ] can	[1 erasure] 2312
ffor to thre formeste that þou hast in þe	
And palamoun that hath swich loue to me	
And ek arcite that louth me so sore	
This grace I preie the with-oute more	2316 • VII. 84.
And send loue & pes be-twixe hem to	•
And from me turne a-wey here hertis so	•
That alle here hote loue & al here desyr	•
And al here besy turment and here fyr	2320 •
Be queynt & turne in a noþer place	•



And ȝif so be þou wilt not do me grace	
Or ȝif myn destene be schapen so	• VII. 85.
That I schal nedys han on of hem to	2324 .
As send me hym that most desyryth me	:
Be-hold goddesse of clene chastite	
The bittere terys that on myne che-kys falle	VII. 78.
Syn þou art maydyn & kepere of vs alle	2328
My maydynhed þou kepe & wel conserue	
And whil I leue / a mayde I wele þ <sup>e</sup> serue	
The fyrys brenne vp on the auter clere	• VII. 88.
Whyl Emalye was þus in here preyere	2332 .
But sodeynly sche sey a seyghte queynte	[leaf 164]
ffor ryght a-non [on] of the ferys queynte	• VII. 91.
And quekede a-geyn & aftyr that anon	.
That othyr fer was queynt & al a-gon	2336 .
And as it queynte it made a whistelyng	.
As don the wete brondis in here brennyng	• VII. 92.
Ant at the brondis ende out ran a-non	.
As it were blodi dropis many on	2340 .
ffor which so sore agast was emalye	
That sche was wol nygh mad & gan to crye	
ffor sche nyste what it sygnefyed	VII. 92.
But only for the fer þus hath sche cryed	2344
And wep þat it was pete for to here	
And þerwithal diane gan apere	• VII. 88.
With bowe in hond rygh as an hunteresse	.
And seyde doughtir stynt þyn heuynesse	2348
Among the goddys hye it is afermyd	• VII. 89.
And by eterne world wretyn and confermyd	['con eterne pa- rola,' VII. 85.]
Thow schalt ben weddit vn-to on of two	• VII. 89.
That han for the so meche care & wo	2352
But vn-to whiche of hem I can not telle	• VII. 89.
ffarwel for I ne may no lengere dwelle	
The ferys whiche þat on myn auter brenne	VII. 89.
Schul the declaryn or that þou go henne	2356
Thyn auenture / of loue as in this cas	

And with þat word / þe arwis in the cas	• <i>Tescide</i>
Of the goddesse clateryn faste & ryng	• VII. 20.
And forthe sche wente & made auanysschyng	2360 •
ffor wich / this emaly / a-stonyd was	
And seyde what amountyth this allas	
I putte me in thyn proteccioun	
Dyane & in thyn dispoecyoun	2364
And hom sche goth anon the nexte weye	• VII. 23.
This is theeffect þere is no more to seye	
The nexte hour of Mars folwyng this	Arcite . Mars
Arcite vn-to the temple walked is	2368
Of ferse Mars / to don his sacrifyse	[leaf 164, back]
With al his rygh / of hese poyn devise	
With pitous herte & hey deuocoun	• VII. 23.
Rygh þus to Mars he seyde hese orysoun	2372 •
O stronge god / that in the regnys colde	• VII. 24.
Of trace honoured art & lord I-holde	•
And hast in euery regne and euery lond	
Of armys al the bridil in þyn hond	2376
And hem fortunyst as the lyst deuyse	
Accepte of me myn pitous sacrifyse	
3if it so be that myn 3outhes may disserue	• VII. 25.
And that myn myght be worthi for to serve	2380 •
Thyn godhed that I may ben on of thyne	•
Thanne preye I the / to rewe vp-on myn pyne	
ffor thylke pyne & thylke hote fuyr	
In whiche whilhom þou brentist for desyr	2384
Whan that þou vsedest the beute	• VII. 25.
Of fayre 3outhes frossche venus fre	•
And haddist here in armys at þyn wille	
Al-though the onys on a tyme mysfyll	2388
Whan vlcanus hadde caught þe in hese las	• VII. 25.
And fond the lyggynge by his wife allas	
ffor thilke sorwe / that was in thyn herte	
Haue routhe as wel vp-on myne peynys smerte	2392
I am 3ong / and oncunnyng as þou wist	• VII. 26.

And as I trowe <i>with</i> loue offendit most	• <i>Teseide.</i>
That euere was ony / lyuys cryature	VII. 28.
ffor sche that doth me al this wo endure	2396
Ne rechith neuere whedyr I synke or fleete	
And wel I wot er sche me mercy hete	
I mot <i>with</i> strenthe wyne here in the place	
And wel I wot / <i>with</i> -oute helpe or grace	2400 • VII. 28.
Of the : ne may myn strenthe not a-vayle	•
Than help me lord to morwe in myn batayle	• VII. 27.
ffor thilke fuyr that whilhom brente the	•
As wel as thilke fer / now brennyth me	2404 •
And do þat I to morwe haue victorie	[leaf 165]
Myn be þ <sup>e</sup> trauayle & thyn the glorye*	[* See p. 25, n. 17.]
Thyn souereyn temple wel I muste honoure	
Of ony place & alwey most labour	2408
In thyn pleasaunce & in thi craftys stronge	
And in thi temple I mowe myn baner honge	• VII. 28.
And alle the armys of myn cumpanye	•
And euere mo vn-to þat day I deye	2412
Eterne fuyr I wele be-fore the fynde	• VII. 28.
And ek to this a-wow I wele me bynde	
Myn berd myn her that hangith long adoun	• VII. 28.
That neuere 3it me felte offencyoun	2416 •
Of rasour ne of schere I wele the 3eue	•
And ben thyn trewe seruauunt whil I leue	
Now lord haue routhe vp on mynne sorwis sore	
3if me the victorie I aske the no more	2420
The preyer stynte of arcita the stronge	
The ryngis on the temple dore that henge	
And ek the doris clateredyn ful faste	• VII. 39.
Of which arcita sum-what hym gaste	2424 •
The fuyres brende vp on the autyr bryzt	• VII. 40.
That it gan al the temple for to lyzt	•
A swete smel a-non the ground vp 3af	•
And arcita anon hese hond vp haf	2428
And more ensens in to the fuyr he <sup>1</sup> caste	[* See VII. 40.]
	[* c altered from st]

With othere ryȝtys mo and at the laste		<i>Teseide.</i>
The statue of mars be-gan hese hauberk ryngē		• VII. 40.
And <i>with</i> that soun he herde a murmuryngē	2432 .	
fful lowe & dym þat seyde þus victorye		
ffor which he ȝaf / to Mars <sup>1</sup> . the glorye <sup>1</sup>	[1-1 over victorye erased]	
And þus <i>with</i> Ioye & and hope wel to fare		• VII. 41.
Arcita anon vn-to his in is fare	2436	
As fayn as foul is of the bryȝte sunne		
And ryȝt anon þere is swich stryf be-gunne		Murmur • VII. 67.
ffor thilke grauntyngē in the heuene aboue		.
Be-twixe venus the goddesse of loue	2440 .	
And mars the sterne god Armypotent		[leaf 165, back] .
That Iupiter was besi it to stynte		
Til that þe pale saturne the colde		
That knowith so manye of auentouris olde	2444	
ffond in hese old experience an art		
That he ful sone hath plesid euery part		
As soth is seyð elde hat gret anauntage		
In elde is bothe wisdam & vsage	2448	
Men may the elde at-renne & not at-rede		
Saturne a-non to stynte stryf & drede		
Al be it þat it is ageyn hese kynde		
Of al this stryf he gan remedie fynde	2452	
Myn dere douȝtyr venus <i>quod</i> saturne		
Myn course þat hath so wyde for to turne		
Hath more power than wit ony man		
Myn is the drenchyng in the se so wan	2456	
Myn is the prisoun in the derke cote		
Myn is the strangelyng & hangyngē bi the throte		
The murmur & the cherle rebellyngē		
The groynyngē & the priue enpoysounyngē	2460	
I do veniaunce and pleyn coreccioun		
Why! I dwelle in the sygne of the lyoun		
Myn is the ruynē of the heye hallys		
The fallyngē of the tourys & of the waliys	2464	
Vp-on the mynour or the carpenter		



I slow Samson schakyng þe piller  
 And myne ben the maladijs colde  
 The darke tresounys & the castis olde 2468  
 Myn lokyng is þe fadir of pestelence  
 Now wep no more I schal don diligence  
 That Palamoun that is þyn owene knyȝt  
 Schal han hese lady as þou hast hym hyȝt 2472  
 Though Mars schal helpe hese knyȝt ȝit neuertheles  
 Be-twixen ȝow there may ben sumtyme pes  
 Alle be ȝe not of on complexioun  
 That causeth al day swich dyuysioun 2476  
 I am thyn aiel redi at thyn wille [leaf 106]  
 Wep now no more I wil þyn lust fulfyllen  
 Now wil I stynte of the goddis aboute  
 Mars & venus goddesses of loue 2480  
 And tellyn ȝow as goodly as I can  
 The grete effect for whiche þat I began

[PART IV. No gap in the MS.]

Gret was the feste in Athenys þat day  
 And ek the lusti sesen of þat may 2484  
 Made euery whit to ben in swich plesaunce  
 That al that moneday Iustene they & daunce  
 And spendyn it in venus hey seruyse  
 And by the cause that þey schulde ryse 2488  
 Erly for to sen the grete fyȝt  
 Vnto here reste wente þey þat nygh[t]  
 And on the morwe whan þat day gan spryng  
 Of hors & harneys noyse & claterynge 2492  
 There was in ostelleryis al aboute  
 And to the paleys rod þere manye a route  
 Of lordys vp-on stedis & palfreys  
 There mayst þou sen / deuysyng of harneys 2496  
 So vncouth & so ryche & wrough so wel  
 Of gold smetheris / of broudyng & of stel

[General imitation of VII. 95-99.]

The scheldys bryghte testers & trappurys		
Gold hew helmys hauberkis cote armurys	2500	
lordis in paramentis on here courserys		
Knyghtis of retenew & ek squyerys		
Naylynge the sperys & helmys bokelynge		
Giggynge of schyldys with lanyerys la-synge	2504	
Ther as nede is þey were no þyng ydyl		
The fomy stedis on the goldene brydyl		• VII. 97.
Gnawynge faste .the. armurys also		•
With fyle & hamyr prikyng to & fro	2508	
Thanne on fote comounnys <sup>1</sup> manye on		[MS altered]
With schorte stauys / as thikke as þey may gon		
Pypis trumpis nakerys claryounnys		
That in the batayle blowyn bloody sounys	2512	
The paleys ful of peplys vp & doun		[leaf 166, back]   VII. 99.
Here thre þere ten / holdynge here questyoun		• VII. 98.
Deuynynge of these / thebene knyghtis too		•
Some seyde thus / some seydyn it schulde be so	2516	
Some heldyn with hym with the blake berd		
Some with the ballede some with the thykke herid		
Some seyde he lokede grymme & he wolde fyghte		
He hath a sparth of twenty pound of weighte	2520	
Thus was the halle ful of dynynynge		
Longe aftyr that the sunne be-gan to sprynge		
The grete thesyus that of hese slep a-wakyd		• VII. 96.
With mynstrelsy & noyse that was makyd	2524	
Held ȝit the chambre of hese paleys ryche		•
Tyl that the theben knyghtis bothe I-liche		
Honoure weryn / in-to the paleys fet		
Deuk thesyus is at a wyndowe set	2528	
Arayed wel as he were a god in trone		
The puple presede dedyrward ful sone		
Hym for to sen & don hey reuerence		
And ek to herkene his hest & his sentence	2532	
An heraud on a skaffald made an hoo		
Til al the noyse of the puple was I-do		

And whan he say / the noyse of puple al styлле		<i>Tesside.</i>
Tho schewede he the myghty dukis wille	2536	
The lord hath of hese hey discrecyoun		See VII. 7-13.
Consyderit þat it were distructioun		
To gentyl blod to fygtyn in the gyse		
Of mortel batayle now in this empyrse	2540	• VII. 7.
Wherfore to schapyn þat þey schul not dye		
He wele hese ferste purpos modyfye		
No man þerfore vp payne of los of lyf		VII. 12
No maner schort polax / no schort knyf	2544	[no lances allowed in Boccaccio].
In to the lystys sende ne dedyr brynge		
Ne schort swerd for to steke with poynt bytynge		
No man it drawe ne bere it by hese syde		
Ne no man schal vn to hese felawe ryde	2548	
But on cours with a scharp I-grounde spere	[leaf 167]	
ffayn 3if hym lyst / on fote hym self to were		
And he that is at myschef schal be take		
And not slayn / but ben brought vn-to the stake	2552	VII. 131-132.
That schal ben ordeynyd on eyþer syde		
But dedir he schal be forse & þere abyde		
And 3if so falle the cheuynteyn be take		
On eythyr syde or ellys slen hese make	2556	
No lengere schal the turnyngre leste		
God spede 3ow. goth forth / & leyth on faste		
With long swerd & with macys fityth 3oure fyllle		• VII. 12 [and with 'bipente'].
Goth now 3oure wey / this is the lordys wille	2560	
The voys of peple touchede the heuene		• VII. 14.
So longe cryedyn þey with merye steuene		•
God sawe swich a lord þat is so good		•
He wylnyth non distructioun of blod	2564	•
Vp goth the trumpys & the melodye		
And to the lystis rit the cumpaynye		
By ordenaunce Throuout The sete large		
Hangit with cloth of gold & not with sarge	2568	
fful lyk a lord þis noble deuk gan ryde		See VII. 100-102.
These too thebenys vp on eyþer syde		

And aftyr rod the quen & emelye		<i>Teseide.</i>
And aftyr þat a noþer cumpanye	2572	VII. 113-4.
Of on & oþer aftyr here degre		
And thus þey passyn thour out the cite		
And to the lystis come þey betyme		
It nas not of the day fully pryme	2576	
Whan set was Thesys ful ryche & hyc		
Ypolita the quen & Emely		
And opere ladyis in degreis aboute		
Vnto the setis / presith al the route	2580	
And westwardis thorough þ <sup>e</sup> gatys vndyr marthe* [ <sup>•</sup> See p. 25, n. 18.]		VII. 114.
Arcite & ek the hunderit of hese parte		
With baner red is enteryd rygh a-non		
And in that selue moment Palamon	2584	VII. 118.
Is vndyr venus Estward in the place		[leaf 167, back]
With baner whit & hardy cher & fac		
In al the world to sekyn vp & doun		
So euene with-oute variacyoun	2588	VII. 19.
There ne were sweche cumpanyis tweye		
ffor þere ne was non that coude seye		
That ony hadde of oþer auantage		
Of worthynesse ne of estat ne age	2592	
So euene were þey <sup>1</sup> chosen for to gesse		[ <sup>1</sup> altered from h]
And too ryngis fayre þey hem dresse		
Whan that here namys rad were euerychon		
That in here noumbre gile was þere non	2596	
Tho were the gatys schette & cryed was loude		
Do now 3oure deuer 3ynge knyghtis proude		
The heroudys lefte here prykyng vp & doun		
Now ryngyn trompys loude & claryoun	2600	VIII. 5.
There is no more to seyne but west & est		
In gon the sperys ful gladly in at rest		
In goth the scharpe spere in to þ <sup>e</sup> syde		VIII. 7.
Ther sen men ho can Iuste & ho can ryde	2604	
There sleueryn sperys vp-on schildys pikke		
He felyth thorw the herte spon the prykke		



Vp spryngyn sperys twenty fote on heyghte		
Out gon þ <sup>e</sup> swerdis as the syluyr bryght	2608	
The helmys they hewyn & to-schrede		
Out brest the blod <i>with</i> sterne stremys rede		
With myghty macys the bonys they to-breste		See VIII. 14, 29, 33, 40, 69, 81, &c.
He thour the thikkeste of the thrang gan threste	2612	
There semblyn stedys stronge & doun goth al		
He rollith vndyr fote as doth a bal		
He foynyth on hese feet <i>with</i> hese trunchoun		
And he hym hurtelith <i>with</i> hese hors adoun	2616	
He thour the body is hurt & sithe take		
Magry his hed & brough vn-to the stake		
As forward was / ryzt þere he wolde abyde		
Anoþer lad is on that oþer syde	2620	
And sumtyme doth hem Thesius to reste	[leaf 168]	
Hem to frossche & drynkyn ȝif hem leste		
fful ofte a day han these Thebens two		
To-gedere I-met & wrought hese felawys wo	2624	VIII. 12.
Vn-horsede hath eche oþer of hem tweye		
Ther nas no Tigre in the vale of Galgopheye		
Whan that here whelp is stole whil it is lyte		VIII. 28.
So crewel on the hunte as is arcyte	2628	
ffor Ielous herte vp-on this Palamoun		
Ne in Belmarye þere ne is non so fel lyoun		
That huntid is or for hese hungryr wod		
Ne of hese prey desyreth so the blod	2632	
As Palamoun to slen hese fo Arcyte		
The Ieluse strokys on here helmys byte		
Out rennyth blod on boþe here sydis rede		
Sumtyme an ende þere is of eyþer dede	2636	
ffor er the sunne vn-to þ <sup>e</sup> reste wente		
The strong kyng / emetryus gan hente		
This Palamoun as he faught <i>with</i> Arcyte		
And made his swerd depe in hese flesch to bite	2640	
And be the forse of twenty is he take		
Vn-ȝoldyn & Idrawyn to the stake		

And in the rescous of this palamoun  
 The stronge kyng lygurge is born adoun 2644  
 And kyng Emetrius for [al] hese strenthe  
 Is born out of hese sadil a swerdis lenthe  
 So hitte hym palamoun or he were take  
 But al for nought he was brought to the stake 2648  
 Hese hardy herte myghte hym helpe nought  
 He muste abyde whan that he was caught  
 By forse & ek by compocycioun  
 Who sorwith now but woful palamoun 2652 | VIII. 123.  
 That may<sup>1</sup> no more gon ageyn to fyghte [1 altered from mo]  
 And whan that Thesius hadde seyn that syghte  
 Vn-to the folk that foughtyn thus echon  
 He cryede ho / no more for it is don 2656  
 I wele be trewe iuge & no partye [leaf 168, back]  
 Arcite of Thebes schal haue Emelye  
 That bi hese fortune hath here fayre wonne  
 A-non þere is a noyse of puple begunne 2660  
 ffor ioie of this so loude & heye with al  
 It semede þat the lystis schulde fal  
 What can now fayre venus don aboue  
 What seyth sche now / what doth this quen of loue 2664  
 But wepith so / for wantynge of here wille  
 Tyl þat here terys in the lystis fylle  
 Sche seyde I am a-schamyd duteles  
 Saturne seyde douȝtyr hold þyn pes 2668  
 Mars hath his wille his knyght al hese bone  
 And be myn hed þou schat ben esed sone  
 The trumpis with the loude mestrelcye  
 The heroudis þat ful loude ȝelle & crye 2672  
 Ben in here wele for ioie of daun Arcyte  
 But herkenyth me & styntyth now a lite  
 Which a merakele þere be-fel a-non  
 This ferse arcyte hath of hese helm I-don 2676 | VIII. 131.  
 An[d] on a courser for to schewe hese face  
 He prikyth endelong the same plase

Lokynge vpward vp on pis Emelye		<i>Tesside.</i>
And sche ageyn hym caste a frendely ye	2680	VIII. 131.
[. . . . .]		VIII. 124-6.
. . . . . no gap in the MS.]		
And was al hese cher as in hese herte		
Out of the ground a furye infernal sterte	2684	[a Fury, raised by Venus, IX. 4.]
ffrom pluto sent at request of saturne		
ffor which hese hors for fer gan to turne		IX. 7.
And lep a syde & founderede as he lep		
And er þat arcite may takyn kep	2688	
He pyghte hym on the pomel of hese hed		
That in þ <sup>e</sup> place he lay as he were ded		IX. 8.
His brest to-brostyn withe sadil bowe		
As blak he lay as ony cole or crowe	2692	
So was the blod ronnyng in hese face		
A-non he was I-born out of the place		IX. 47.
With herte sor to thesenaus paleys	[leaf 109]	
Tho was he korvyn out of hese harneys	2696	IX. 13.
And in a bed I-brout ful fayre & blythe		IX. 48.
ffor he was 3it in memory & alyue		
And alwey cryinge aftyr Emelye		
Duk Thesisus with al hese cumpanye	2700	IX. 38.
Is comyn hom to athenus hese cete		
With al blys & gret solempnete		
Al be it þat this / auenture was falle		
He nylde not disconfortyn hem alle	2704	
Men seyde ek that Arcita schal not deye		IX. 26.
He schal ben helyd of hese maladye		
And of a noþer þyng þey wern as fayn		
That of hem alle was þere non I-slayn *	[* See p. 25, n. 19.] 2708	
Alle were þey sore I-hurt & namely on		
That with a spere was therlyd hese brest bon		
To othere woundis & to brokene armys		
Some haddyn saluys & some haddyn charmys †	[† See p. 25, n. 20.]	
ffermacies of erbis & ek saue	2713	
þey dronken / for þey woldyn here lemys haue		

ffor which this noble deuk as he wel can		<i>Teseide.</i>
Confortyth & honouref euery man	2716	
And made reuel al the longe nyght		IX. 61.
Vn to þo straunge <sup>1</sup> lordis as was ryght		[ <sup>1</sup> altered from stronge]
Ne þere was holdyn non disconfitinge		
But as a iustis or a turneynynge	2720	
ffor sothely þere was non disconfiture		
ffor fallynge nys not but an auenture		
Ne to be lad be forse on to the stake		
Vnzoldyn & . with twenty knyghtis I-take	2724	
On persone a-lone with-oute mo		
And haried by arm fote & to		
And ek hese stede dreuyn forth with stauys		
With footmen bothe ȝemen & ek knavys	2728	
It nas arettyd hym no velanye		
There may no man clepe it cowardye		
ffor which a-non deuk Theseus let crye		[leaf 169, back]
To styntyn alle rancure & enuye	2732	
The gre as wel on o syde as of othir		IX. 54.
And cythyr syde liche <sup>2</sup> lyk a operis brothir		[ <sup>2</sup> MS. altered]
And ȝeue hem ȝiftys aftyr here degre		XII. 80,
And fully held a feste dayis thre	2736	Fifteen days.
And conueyed þ <sup>e</sup> kyng worthily		
Out of hese town a iurne largely		
And hom wente euery man the ryghe way		XII. 83.
þere was no more but farwel & heue good day	2740	
Of this batayle I wele no more endyte		
But speke we of palamoun & arcite		
Swellyth the brest of Arcite & the sor*		[* See p. 25, n. 21.] ; See X. 11.
Encreseth at hese herte more & mor	2744	;
The cloterede blod for ony leche-craft		;
Corupteth & is in hese bouk I-laft		;
That neyþer veyne blod ne ventusyng		;
Ne drynk of erbis may ben hese helpynge†		[† See p. 25, n. 22.]
The vertu expulsyf of anymal	2749	
ffor thilke vertu clepe I natural		



Ne may the vertu voyde ne expelle		
The pypis of hese lungys gunne to swelle *	[* See p. 25, n. 23.]	2752
And euery lacerte in hese brest adoun		
Is schent <i>with</i> vertu & corupeyoun		
Hym gaynyth ney <sup>per</sup> for to gete his lyf		
Vomyt vpwar ne douzward laxatyf		2756
Al is to-brostyn / thilke regioun		
Nature hath no domynacyoun †	[† See p. 25, n. 23.]	
And serteynly <i>pere</i> nature wele not werch		
ffarwel fysyk go bere the man to scherche		2760
This al and <i>sum</i> that arcite mot deye		X. 12.
ffor which he sendyth Aftyr Emalye		X. 37, 61.
And palamoun that was hese cosyn dere		
Thanne seyde he þus as 3e schul aftyr here		2764
Nowt may the woful spyrt in myn herte		X. 54-5.
Declare on poynt of alle mynne sorwis smerte		
Do 3ow myn lady that I loue most	[leaf 170]	
But I be-quethe the spyrit of myne gost		2768   X. 62.
To 3ow a-bouyn euery cryature		
Syn that myn lyf may no lengere dure		
Allas the wo alas the peynys stronge		X. 102.
That I for 3ow haue suffered & so longe		2772
Allas the deth alas myn Emelye		X. 103.
Allas the partynge of oure cumpaynye		
Allas myn hertis quene alas myn wif		
Myn hertis lady endere of myn lyf		2776
What is this world what askyn men to haue		
Now with hese loue now in hese colde graue		
A-lone <i>withoutyn</i> ony cumpanye		
ffarewel myn swete fo myn emelye		2780
And softe tak me in 3oure armys tweye ‡	[‡ See p. 25, n. 24.]	
ffor loue of god & herkene what I schal seye		
I haue here <i>with</i> myn cosyn palamoun		X. 60-2.
Had strif & rancur manye a day agon		2784
ffor loue of 3ow & for myn Ielusye		
And Iupiter so wisely myn soule gye		

To spekyn of a seruaunt properly			<i>Tesside.</i>
With alle circumstauncys trewely	2788		X. 62.
That is to seyne / strenth . honour . knyghede .			
Wisdam . vmblesse . estat . & hey kynrede .			
ffredom . & al that longith to that art			
So Iupiter haue of myn soule part	2792		
As in þis world now ne knowe I non			X 63.
So worthi to be louyd as palamon			
That seruyth þow & wele don al hese lyf			
And ȝif that euere ȝe schul be a wif	2796		
ffor-ȝet not palamoun the gentyl man *		[* See p. 25, n. 25.]	
And with that word hese speche fayle gan			
ffor from hese herte vp to hese brest was come			• X. 111, 112.
The colde of deth þat hadde hym ouercome	2800		•
And ȝit more ouyr for in hese armys two			•
The vital strenthe is lost & al a-go			•
Only the intellect with-outyn more		[leaf 170, back]	•
That dwellede in hese herte syk & sore	2804		•
Gan fayle whan the herte felte deth			•
Dusked hese eyne þ° & faylede breth			•
But on hese lady ȝit caste he hese eye			•
Hese laste word was mercy Emelye	2808		•
Hese spyrit schaungede hous & wente pere			• See XI. 1-3, and the end of <i>Tristram</i> & <i>Cressida</i> .
As I cam neuere I can not telle where			
There-fore I stynte I neam no dyuynystere			
Of soulys fynde I not in þis registre	2812		
Ne me ne leste thilke opynyounys to telle			
Of hem though they write / where þat þey dwelle			
Arcyte is cold there Mars hese soule gye			
Now wele I speke forth of Emelye	2816		
Schrikte Emelye & houlith palamoun			XI. 6.
And thesytus hese sistyr tok a-non			
Swounnyng & bar here from the cors away			
Wha helpith it to tarie forth the day	2820		
To telle how sche wep bothe eue & morwe			
ffor in swich cas wemen haue swich sorwe			

Whan that here hosbondys ben from hem a-go		<i>Tesside.</i>
That for the more part þey sorwe so	2824	
Or ellys fallyn in swich maledye		
That at the laste serteynly þey deye		
Infynyte ben / the sorwis & þe terys		XI. 8.
Of olde folk & folk of tendere ȝerys	2828	
In al the toun for deth of this Theban		
ffor hym there wepith boþ <sup>e</sup> child & man		
So gret a wepyng was there non sertayn		• XI. 7.
Whan Ettor <sup>1</sup> was brought <sup>1</sup> al frosh I-slayn	[ <sup>1</sup> tt, t: modern]	•
To troye allas the pete þat was there	2833	
Crachynge of chekys / rentynge of <sup>2</sup> here	[ <sup>2</sup> h: later]	
Whi woldist þou ben ded þese women crye		
And haddyst gold I-now & emelye	2836	
No man myghte glade Thesys <sup>*</sup>	[* See p. 25, n. 26.]	• XI. 9.
Sauynge hese olde fadyr egyus		
That knew this worldis transmutacyoun	[leaf 171]	• XI. 10. 11.
As he hadde seyn it vp & doun	2840	•
Ioye after wo & wo after gladnesse		•
And schewede hem ensaumplys & lyknesse		•
Ryght <sup>3</sup> as þere deyede neuere man <i>quod</i> he	[ <sup>3</sup> t: later]	• XII. 6.
That he ne leuede in erthe in sum degre	2844	•
Ryght so þere leuede neuere man he seyde		•
In al this world that sumtyme he ne deyede		•
This world is not but a thourfare ful of wo		
And we ben pilgrymys passynge to & fro	2848	
Deth is an ende of euery wordely sore		
And oueral þis ȝit seyde he mechil more		
To this effect ful wisely to enhorte		
The pule that þey schulde hem reconforte	2852	
Deuk Thesys with al hese besi cure		• XI. 13.
Cast now wher <sup>4</sup> þat þ <sup>e</sup> sepulture	[ <sup>4</sup> r: later]	•
Of goode Arcyt may best I-makyd be		•
And ek most honourable in hese degre	2856	•
And at the laste he tok conclusioun		
That þere as fyrst arcite & palamoun		

Haddyn for loue the batayle hem be-twene		
That þ <sup>e</sup> selue groue sote & grene	2860	<i>Teseide.</i> XI. 13.
Ther as he hadde hese amerouse desyres	.	.
Hese compleynt & for loue hese hote fyres	.	.
He wolde make a fyr in whiche thoffys	.	.
funeral. he myghte al a-complice	2864	.
And let comaunde anon to hakke & hewe		XI. 14.
The okys olde & leyn hem on a rewe		
In culpounnys wel arayed for to brenne		
Hese offyserys <i>with</i> swifte feet þey renne	2868	.
And ryde a-non at hese comaundement	.	.
And aftyr þis thesius hath sche sent	.	XI. 15.
Aftyr a bere & it al ouer-spradde	.	.
With cloth of gold the rycheeste that he hadde	2872	.
And of the same sute he cladde arcite	.	.
Vp-on hese hondis hese glouys whyte		
Ek on hese hed a coroune of laurer grene	[leaf 171, back]	.
And in hese hand a swerd ful brygh & kene	2876	.
He leyde hym bare þ <sup>e</sup> vesage on the bere		
Therwith he wept þat pete was to here		
And for the puple schulde sen hym alle	.	XI. 16.
Whan it was day he broughte hym to þ <sup>e</sup> halle	2880	.
That roryth of þ <sup>e</sup> cryinge & þ <sup>e</sup> soun	.	XI. 30.
Tho cam þis woful Theban Palamun	.	.
With flotery & rogi flateri herys	.	.
In clopys blake I-droppid al <i>with</i> terys	2884	.
And passynge opere of wepyng Emelye*	[* See p. 25, n. 27.]	XI. 31.
The reufuleste of al the cumpaynye		
In as meche as the seruyse schulde be		
The more noble & ryche in hese degre	2888	
Duk Thesys let forth thre stedis brynge		XI. 35.
That trappede were al in stel al glederynge		
And keuened the armys of daun arcyte		
Vp-on þese stedis grete & white	2892	
There setyn folk of which on bar hese schyld		
Anothir hese spere vp on hese hondys held		



The thredde bar <i>with hem</i> hese bowe turkeys			<i>Tesside.</i>
Of brend gold was the cas & ek the harneys	2896		XI. 35.
And redyn forth a pas <i>with</i> sorweful chere			
Toward the groue as 3e schul aftyr here			
The nobileste of the grekys <i>þat þere</i> were		•	XI. 38.
Vp on here schulderyn caryedyn the bere	2900	•	
With slak pas & eighen . reede & wete			
Thorough-out the Cete / by the maystyr strete			
That sprad was al <i>with</i> blak & wondyr hye			
Ryght of the same is the strete I-wrye	2904		
Vp-on the ryght hand wente old egeus *	[* See p. 25, n. 28.]	•	XI. 40.
And on that oþer syde deuk Thesyus		•	
With vessellys in here hondys of gold ful fyn †	[† See p. 25, n. 29.]	•	XI. 37.
Al ful of. hony. mylk. blod & wyn .	2908	•	XI. 40.
Ek Palamoun <i>with</i> ful gret cumpaynye		•	
And aftyr that <i>cam</i> woful emelye		•	
With fuyre in hond as was <i>þat</i> tyme þ <sup>e</sup> gyse	[leaf 172]	•	
To don the offyse of feneral seruyse	2912	•	
Hey labour & ful gret aparaylynge		•	XI. 18.
Was at the seruyse & the fer makynge			
That <i>with</i> hese gret top the heuene raughte			XI. 26.
And twenty fademe of brede þ <sup>e</sup> armys straughte	2916		
This is to seyne þ <sup>e</sup> bowys were so brode			
Of treis fyrst <i>þere</i> were leyd manye a lode			XI. 27.
But how þ <sup>e</sup> fuyr was makyd vp on heichte			XI. 22-25.
Ne ek the namys what þ <sup>e</sup> treis hyghte	2920		
As. ook. fyrre. Birch. asp. Aldyr. Holm. Popeler			
Wylw. Elm. Plane. Assh. Box. chesteyn. lynde. laurer			
Mapil. thorn. Bech. hasil. Ew. Whippil. trre			
How þey were feld schal not be told for me	2924		
Ne how the goddys rennyñ vp & doun			
Dyserhitid of here abitacyoun			
In wheche þey wendyn in reste & pes			
Nymphus ffaunes & amadries	2928		
Ne how the bestis & þ <sup>e</sup> bryddys alle		•	XI. 21.
fleddyn for fer whan the wode was falle		•	

Ne how the ground agast was of the lyght			<i>Teseide.</i>
That was not wont to sen the sunne brygh[t]	2932		XI. 21.
Ne how the fer was couche fyrst with stre			• XI. 27.
And panne with dreye stikkis clouyn a thre			•
And panne with grene wode & spicerye			•
An panne with cloth of gold & with perrye	2936		• XI. 29.
And garlondis hangynge with mani <sup>1</sup> a flour		[ <sup>1</sup> ani: later]	• XI. 27.
The mirre <sup>2</sup> þ <sup>e</sup> ensens with al so gret odour		[ <sup>2</sup> irre: later]	• XI. 28.
Ne how arcite lay a-mong al <sup>3</sup> þis		[ <sup>3</sup> 1: later]	XI. 39.
Ne what richesse a-boute hese body Is	2940		
Ne how þat Emelye as was te gyse			XI. 40.
Putte in the fuyr of funeral seruyse			
Ne how sche swounnede whan men made þ <sup>e</sup> fuyr			XI. 41-46.
Ne what sche spak ne what was here desyr	2944		
Ne what Iewell men in the fuyr caste			XI. 48, 50.
Whan þat the fuyr was gret & brente faste			
Ne how some caste here schyld & some here spere		[If 172, bk]	• XI. 56.
And of here vestementis which þat they were	2948		• XI. 50.
And cuppis ful of wyn & mylk & blod			XI. 50, 51.
In-to the fuyr þat brente as it were wod			
Ne how the grekys with an heuge route			XI. 52.
Thryes redyn al the fuyre a-boute	2952		• XI. 53.
Vp-on the left half with a loud schoutynge			•
And thryes with here sperys claterynge		[line repeated and crossed out]	•
And thryes how the ladyis gunne crye			XI. 54.
Ne how that lad was hom-ward Emalye	2956		
Ne how Arcyte was brent to asschyn colde			XI. 57, 58.
Ne how that lyche / wake was I-holde			XI. 59-67.
Al thilke nyght ne how the grekys pleye			
The wake-pleyis ne kepe I not to seye	2960		
Who wrestelyth best nakyd with oille enoynt			
Ne who þat bar hym best in no disioynt			
I wele not tellyn ek how þat þey gon			
Hom to athenys whan the pley is don	2964		
But schortly to the poynt panne wele I wende			
And makyn of myn longe tale an ende			

Be proces & be lenthe a certeyn ȝerys		•	<i>Teseida.</i>
Al styntyd is the mournyng & the terys	2968	•	XII. 3. 'giorni', instead of <i>years</i> .
Of grekys be on general assent		•	
Than semede me pere was a parlement			
At athenes vp on certeyn poyntys and cas			
A-mong the poyntys spokyn was	2972		
To haue with certeyn poyntys aliance			
And haue fully of thebens obeissaunce			
ffor which this nobil theseus anon			
Let sendyn aftyr gentil palamon	2976	•	XII. 4.
Vnwist of hym what was the cause & why		•	
But in hese blake clopis sorwefully		•	
He come at hese owene comaundement in hye			
To sente Theseus / for emelye	2980		
Whan þey were set & hust was al the place	[leaf 173]	•	XII. 5.
And thesyus abedyn hadde a space		•	
Er ony word cam from hese wyse brest			
Hese eynyn sette he pere as was hese lest	2984		
And with a sad visage he sikede stille			
And aftyr þat ryght þus he seyde hese wille			
The ferste mournere <sup>1</sup> of the cause aboue	[? MS.]	•	IX. 51.
Whan he ferst made þ <sup>e</sup> cheyne of loue	2988	•	<i>mondo</i> , for 'cheine of loue.'
Gret was theffect & hy was hese entent			
Wel wiste he why & what þerof he ment			IX. 51.
ffor with that fayre cheyne of loue he bond			
The fuyr the eyre the watyr & the lond	2992		
In certeyn boundys þat þey may not fle			
That same prince & þat same Moeuere quod he			[See IX. 51. 52, and XII. 6.]
Hath stablyschid in this wrechede world a doun			
Certeyn dayis & duracioun	2996		
To alle þat is engenderid in þis place			
Ouer the whiche day þey may not pace			
Alle mowe þey ȝit þe dayis wel a-bregge			
þere nedyth non autorite to legge	3000		
ffor it is preuyd be experyence			
But þat me lyste to clare myn sentence			

Thanne may men by þis ordere wel diserne		
That tylke moeuere styлле & sterne	3004	
Wel may men knowe but it be a fol		
That euery part dryuyth from hese hol		
ffor nature hath takyn hese begynnyng		
Of no party or of a cantel of a þyng	3008	
But of a þyng þat parfyt is & stable		
Dessendynge so til it be corumpable		
And þerfore for hese wise puryaunce		
He hath so wel be-set hese ordenaunce	3012	
That specyfie of þyngis & progressiounys		
Shul endure be succesciounys		
And not eterne with-outyn ony lye		
This mayst þou vndyrstondyn & sen at eye	3016	
lo þ <sup>e</sup> ok that hath so long a norichynge	[leaf 173, back]	XII. 7.
ffrom the tyme þat it ferst begynnyth to sprynge		
And hat so long a lyf as we may se	.	
3it at the laste wastyd is the tre	3020	
Considerith ek how that the harde ston	.	
Vndir oure fet on whiche we trede & gon	.	
3it wastith it as it lyth be the weye		
The brode reuyr sumtyme waxeth dreye	3024	.
The grete tounys se we wane & wende		
Than may I say þat al þis thyng hath ende		
Of man & woman se we we wel alsoo	.	XII. 8.
That nedyth in on of þese termys too	3028	.
This is to seyne in 3outhen or ellys age	.	
He mote be ded the kyng as schal a page		
Some in his bed some in the depe se	.	XII. 10.
Some in the large feld as men may se	3032	.
There helpith not al goth that ilke weye		
Thanne may I seyn al þis þyng mote nedis deye		
What makyth þis but Iupiter þ <sup>e</sup> kyng		
That is prynee & cause of alle thyng	3036	
Conuertynge al vn-to hese propere welle		
ffrom wiche it is deryvit soth to telle		



And here ageyn no cryatour on . lyue			<i>Teseide.</i>
Of no degre a-uaylith for to stryue	3040		XII. 6.
Thanne is it wisdom as it þynkyt me			XII. 11.
To makyn vertu of necessite			
And take it wel that we may not eschewe			
And nameli that to vs alle is dewe	3044		
And ho so grochit out he doth folye			XII. 13.
And rebel is to hym þat al may gye			
And serteynly a man hath most honour			XII. 9, 12.
To deyen in hese excellence & flour	3048		
Whan he is sekyr of hese goode name			
Thanne hath he don hese frend ne hym no schame			
And gladdere owith hese frend to ben of deth			
Whan with honour is 3oldyn vp hese breth	3052		
Than whan his name apeyred is for age		[leaf 174]	
ffor al forgetyn is his wasseyllage			
Thanne is it best as for a worthi fame			
A man to deye whan he is best of name	3056		
The contrarie of al this is wilfulnes			XII. 13.
Why groche we why haue we heuynes			XII. 14-17.
That goode arcite of chyualrye flour			
Departid is with deynte & honour	3060		
Out of þis foule prysoun of þis lyf			
Why grochyn here his cosyn & his wif			
Of [his welfare that loueth hem so wel]		[Sloane MS. 1685]	
Can he hem thank nay god wot neuere adel	3064		
That boþe hese soule & ek hym self offende			
And 3it þey mowe here lustis not amende			
What may I conclude of þis longe serye			
But aftyr wo I rede vs to be merye	3068		XII. 13.
And thankyn Iupiter of al hese grace			
And er þat we departe from þis place			
I rede we make of sorwys too			
On parfyt Ioye lastynge eueremo	3072		
And lokyth now where most sorwe is her inne			
There [wil I first bigynne		[Sloane MS. 1685]	

[Suster quod he this is my ful assent	[Sloane MS. 1685]	<i>Teoide.</i>
With alle thaues heere of my parlement	3076	
That gentyl palamon 3oure owne knyght		
That seruyth 3ou with wil herte and myght		
As euer hath don sithen 3e first hym knewe		
That 3e shul of 3oure [grace] vpon him rewe	3080	
And taken for husbond and for lord		
Lene me 3oure hond for this is oure acorde		
Lete see now if youre wommanly pitee		
He is a kingis brother sone parde	3084	
A[nd thou3 he be a pore bachelere		
S[ithen he hath serued 3ou so many a 3ere		
A[nd had for 3ou so gret aduersite		
It [most be considered leuyth me]	[Sloane extr. ends] 3088	
ffor gentyl mercy owith to passyn ryght	[Cambridge Gg. iv. 27, leaf 174, back]	
Than seyde he þus to palamoun ful rygh[t]		
I trowe þere nedyth lytil sarmonyng		
To make 3ow assente to the thyng	3092	
Come ner & tak 3oure lady bi the hond		
By-tweþyn hem was mad anon the bond		XII. 69.
That hyghte matrymonye or mariage		
By al the cuntre & the barounnage	3096	
And þus with al blys & melody		XII. 72.
Hath Palamoun I-wedded emely		
And god þat al þis wyde word hath wrought		
Synde hym his loue þat hath it dere abought	3100	
ffor now is Palamoun in alle wele		XII. 83.
leuyng in blysse in richesse & in hele		
And Emelye hym louyth so tenderly		
And he here seruyth so gentyllly	3104	
That neuere was þere no word hem be-twen		
Of Ielousye or any oþer teene <sup>1</sup>	[1 teene: later]	
Thus endyth Palamoun & Emelye		
And god saue al this flayre cumpaynye.	3108	

[rest of leaf nearly all cut out.]

**S**O whan þ<sup>e</sup> knyght hath þus hese tale told [leaf 175]  
 In al þ<sup>e</sup> route nas þere ȝyng ne old  
 That he ne seyde it nas a noble story  
 And worthy for to drawe to memory 3112  
 And nameli þ<sup>e</sup> gentilis euerychon  
 Our ost lough and swor so mote I gon  
 Thys goth aryght onbokeled is the male  
 Let sen now who schal telle a noþer tale 3116  
 ffor trewely the game is wel begunne  
 Now tellyth ȝe sere monk ȝyf þat ȝe kunne  
 Sumwhat to quite with þ<sup>e</sup> knyghtis tale  
 The mellere that dronke was al pale 3120  
 So that a-nethe vp on his hors he sat  
 He nulde a-vale neythyr hod ne hat  
 Ne abyde no man for hese curteysye  
 But in pilat voys he gan to crye 3124  
 And swor by armys & by blod & bonys  
 I can a noble tale for thenonys  
 With whiche he wele now quyte þe knyȝtis tale  
 Oure ost saw þat he was dronke of ale 3128  
 And seyde a-byd Robyn myn leue brothyr  
 Sum betere man schal telle vs fyrst a nothyr  
 Onhyd & lat vs werke thryftyly  
 By goddys soule / quod he þat wele nat I 3132  
 ffor I wele speke or ellys gon myn wey  
 Oure ost answerde telle on a delewey  
 Thow art a fol thy wit is ouercome  
 Now herkenygh quod the mellere alle & some 3136  
 But fyrst I make a protestacyoun  
 That I am dronke I knowe it be myn souz  
 And þerfore ȝif I mys speke or seye  
 Wite it the ale of Southwerk I preye 3140

ffor I wele telle a legende & a lyf  
 Bothe of a carpenter & hese wyf  
 How that a clerk hath set the wryghtis cappe  
 The reue answerde & seyde stynt þyn clappe 3144  
 let be þyn lewede dronke harlotrye (leaf 175, back)  
 It is a synne & ek a gret folye  
 To apeyre ony man or hym diffame  
 And ek to bryngyn whyuys in swych fame 3148  
 þou mayst I-now of opere thyngis sayn  
 This dronkyn mellere spak ful sone ageyn  
 And seyde leue brothyr Osewold  
 Ho hath no wif he is no coukewold 3152  
 But I seye not þerfore þat þou art on  
 There ben ful goode wivis manyon  
 And euer a thousent goode a-zens on badde  
 That knowyst þou wel þyn self / but ȝif þou madde 3156  
 Why art þou angry with myn tale now  
 I haue a wif also as wel as þou  
 ȝit nolde I not for the oxsyn in myn plow  
 Takyn vp on me more þan I-now 3160  
 As demyn in myn self þat þou were on  
 I wele be-leue wel þat I ne am non  
 An husbonde schal not ben inquysityf  
 Of goddis priuete nor of hese wyf 3164  
 So he may fyndyn godis foysounn there  
 Of the remenaunt nedyth not tenquyre  
 What schalde I seyn But this mellere  
 Hé wolde hese wordys for no man forbere 3168  
 But tolde hese cherlych tale in hese manere  
 Me thynkyth I schal reherse it here  
 And þerfore euery gentyl wygh I preye  
 ffor goddis loue demyth not þat I seye 3172  
 Of euyl entent but for I mot reherse  
 Here talys al be þey betere or werse  
 Or ellys fallyn sum of myn matere  
 And þerfore who so leste it not here 3176



Turne ouer the lef & ches a noþer tale	
for he schal fynde I-nowe grete & smale	
Of storyal thyng þat touchith gentillesse	
An ek Morallite and holynesse	3180
Blamyth not me 3if 3e chesyn amys	[leaf 176]
The mellere is a cherl 3e knowe wel this	
So was the reue & opere manye mo	
And harlotrye þey tolde bothe to	3184
Avyseth 3ow put me out of blame	
And ek men schal not makyn ernest of game	
here endith the prologe/	
[No gap in the MS.]	

& here begynnynth the tale.

**W** Hilhom þere was dwellinge in Oxenforde  
 A ryche gnoff þat gestis helde to borde 3188  
 And of his craft a carpenter  
 With hym þere was dwellynge a pore scoler  
 Hadde lernede art but of hese fantasye  
 Was turned for to lernyn astronomye 3192  
 And coude a certyn of conclusiounys  
 To demyn by interrogacyounys  
 3if that men axsed hym in certeyn hourys  
 Whan men schulde haue droughte or elle schourys 3196  
 Or 3if men axsede hym what schulde be-falle  
 Of euery thyng I may not rekene hem alle  
 This clerk was clepid hende nycholas  
 Of derne loue he coude & of solas 3200  
 And þerto he was sly & ful preue  
 And lyk a mayde meke for to se  
 A chambre hadde he in that ostelrye  
 Alone with-outyn ony compaygnye 3204  
 fful fetously I-dygh with erbis sote  
 And he hym self as swete as is the rote  
 Of licorys or ony Cetewale  
 Hese almageste & bokys grete & smale 3208  
 Hese augrym stonys lynge fayre apart  
 Hese astellabre longynge for hese art  
 On scheluyys couchede at hese bedys hed  
 Hese presse I-couered with a faldynge red 3212  
 And al aboue þere lay a gay sautrye  
 On whiche he made on nyghtis melodye  
 So swetely þat al the chambere rong [leaf 176, back]  
 And Angelus ad uirginem he song 3216  
 And aftyr þat he song the kyngis note  
 fful oftyn blyssede was hese mery throte

And þus this swete clerk hese tyme he spente  
 Aftyr hese frendys fyndynge & hese rente 3220  
 This carpenter hadde weddid newe a wyf  
 Whiche þat he louede more þan hese lyf  
 Of eightene 3er sche was of age  
 Ielous he was & held here narwe in cage 3224  
 ffor sche was wilde & 3yng & he was old  
 And demede hym self / ben lyk a coukewold  
 He knew not catoun for hese wit was rude  
 That bad men schulde wedde here symylitude 3228  
 Men schulde wedde aftyr here estat  
 ffor 3oughte & elde ben oftyn at debat  
 But sythyn þat he was fallyn in the snare  
 He muste endure as opere folk hese care 3232  
 ffayr was þis 3onge wif & þerwith al  
 As ony wesele here body gent & smal  
 A seynt sche werede þ<sup>e</sup> seynt al of sylk  
 A barme cloth as whit as ony mylk 3236  
 Vp on here lendis ful of manye a gore  
 Whit was here smok I-brouded al be-fore  
 And ek be-hyndyn on here coller aboute  
 Of col blak silk with-inne & ek with-oute 3240  
 The tapes of here white voluper  
 Were of the same sute of here coller  
 Hyre filet brod of silk I-set ful hye  
 And sekyrly sche hadde a lycorous eye 3244  
 fful smale I-pullede were hese browis to  
 And þ<sup>e</sup> were bent & blake as is a slo  
 Sche was more blysful on to se  
 Than is the newe pere Ionete tre 3248  
 And softere than is the wolfe of a wedyr  
 And by here gerdil heng a purs of ledyr  
 Tassellid with sylk & perlit with latoun  
 In al this world to sekyn vp & doun [leaf 277] 3252  
 There is no man so wys that coude thynche  
 So gay a popelote or swych a wenche

fful bryght was the schynynge of here hewe  
 Than in þ<sup>e</sup> tour/ the noble forgit newe 3256  
 But of here song it was as loude & 3erne  
 As ony swalwe syttyng on a berne  
 And þerto sche coude skippe & make game  
 As ony kede or kalf folwende hese dame 3260  
 Here mouth was swete as braket or the methe  
 Or hord of appillis leyd in hay or hethe  
 Wynsynge sche was as is a ioly colt  
 Long as a mast & vp ryght as a bolt 3264  
 A broche she bar vp on here lowe coler  
 As brod as is the bos of a bokeler  
 Here schois were lasyd on here leggis hye  
 Sche was a prymrole & a piggis nye 3268  
 ffor ony lord to liggyn in hese bedde  
 Or ek for ony good 3eman to wedde  
 Now sere & eft sere so be-fel the cas  
 That on a day this hendyn Nicholas 3272  
 ffil with þis 3ynge wif rage & pleye  
 Whil þat here husbonde was at Hoseneye  
 As clerkys ben ful sotyl & ful queynte  
 And priuily he caughte here bi þ<sup>e</sup> queynte 3276  
 And seyde I-wis but I mowe haue myn wille  
 ffor derne loue of the lemman I spille  
 And held here harde be the haunche bonys  
 And seyde lemman loue me al at onys 3280  
 Or I wele deyin al so god me saue  
 And sche sprong as a colt doth in the traue  
 And with here hed sche wrythed faste a-wey  
 Sche seyde I wel not kysse þ<sup>e</sup> be my fey 3284  
 Whi let be *quod* sche let be nycholas  
 Or I wele crye out harrow allas  
 Do wey 3oure hondis for 3oure curteysy  
 This nycholas gan mercy for to cry [leaf 177, back] 3288  
 And spak so fayre & proferede hym so faste  
 That sche here loue hym grauntede at þ<sup>e</sup> laste



And swor here oth be seynt Thomays of kent  
 That he wolde ben at hese comaundement 3292  
 Whan þat sche may here layser wel asspye  
 Myn husbonde is so ful of Ielousye  
 That but 3e waite wel & ben priue  
 I wot ryght wel I am but ded *quod* sche 3296  
 3e muste ben ful derne as in þis cas  
 Nay þerof care 3e not *quod* Nicholas  
 A clerk hadde lethyrly be-set hese while  
 But 3if he coude a carpenter be-gyle 3300  
 And þus they ben acordit & I-sworn  
 To wayte a tyme as I haue told be-forn  
 Whan Nicholas hadde don þis euery del  
 An thakkede here a-boute the lendis wel 3304  
 He kyssith here swete & takyth hese sautrye  
 And pleyeth faste & makyth melodye  
 Thanne fel it thus þat to þ<sup>e</sup> parich cherche  
 Crystys owene werkys for to werche 3308  
 This goode wyf wente on an haly day  
 Here forehed schon as bryght as ony day  
 So was it wasschyn whan sche let here werk  
 Now was þere of that cherche a parysch clerk 3312  
 The wheche þat was clepid absolon  
 Crol was hese her & as þ<sup>e</sup> gol it schon  
 And strut as a fan large & brod  
 fful streyt & euene lay hese Ioly schod 3316  
 His rode was red hese ey3yn greye as gos  
 With poulys wyndow I-korwyn on hese schois  
 In hosyn rede he wente fetusly  
 I-clad he was ful smal & properly 3320  
 Al in a kyrtel of a lyght vachet  
 fful fayre & thikke. ben the poyntis set  
 And þerupon he hadde a gay surplys [leaf 178]  
 As whit as is the blome on the rys 3324  
 A merye chyld he was so god me saue  
 Wel coude he letyn blod & wel schaue

And make a chartere of lond & aquitaunce  
 In twenty manerys coude he trippe & daunce 3328  
 Aftyr the skole of Oxenforthe þo  
 And with hese leggis castyn to & fro  
 And pleyen songys on a smal rubybe  
 Therto he song sumtyme a loud quynyble 3332  
 And as wel coude he pleye on a geterne  
 In al the toun nas brew hous ne tauerne  
 That he ne visityd with hese solas  
 There ony galiard tapstere was 3336  
 But soth to seyn he was sumdel coymous  
 Of fartynge & of speche daungerous  
 This absalon that Ioly was & gay  
 Goth with a senser on the halyday 3340  
 Sensynge þ<sup>e</sup> wyuys of the parych faste  
 And manye a louely lok on hem he caste  
 And namely on þis Carpenterys wyf  
 To loke on here he thouȝte a merye lyf 3344  
 Sche was so propere & swete & lycurous  
 I dar wel seyn ȝif sche hadde ben a mous  
 And he a cat he wolde here hente a-non  
 This parych clerk þis Ioly Absalon 3348  
 Hath in hese herte swich a louelonyng  
 That of no wif tok he non offerynge  
 ffor curteysye he seyde he wolde non  
 The mone whan it was nyght ful bryghte it schon 3352  
 And absalon hadde hese geterne take  
 ffor paramourys he thoughte for to wake  
 And forth he goth Iolyf & ameraus  
 Tyl he come to þ<sup>e</sup> carpenterys hous 3356  
 A lytil aftyr þ<sup>e</sup> cokkys hadde crowe  
 And dressede hym vp be a schot wyndowe  
 That was vp on the carpenterys wal [leaf 178, back]  
 He syngyth in hese wois<sup>1</sup> gentil & smal (1 corrected) 3360  
 Now dere lady ȝif thyn wille be  
 I preye ȝow that ȝe wele rewe on me

fful wel acordaunt to hese geternynge  
 This carpentire a-wok & herde hym synge 3364  
 And spak vn to hese wyf & seyde a-non  
 What alysoun heryst not þou absalon  
 That schauentyth þus vndyr oure bouris wal  
 And sche answerde here husbonde þerwithal 3368  
 3is god wot Ihun I here it euerydel  
 This passeth forth what wele 3e bet þan wel  
 ffrom day to day this Ioly Absolon  
 So wowith here þat hym is wo begon 3372  
 He wakyth al the nyght & al the day  
 He kempte hese lokys brode & made hym gay  
 He wowith here be menys & procage  
 And swor he wolde ben here owene page 3376  
 He syngyth brokkyng as a nyghtyngale  
 He sente here pyment mede & spicede ale  
 And waferys pipinge hote out of the glede  
 ffor sche was of tounne he proferede mede 3380  
 ffor sum folk wele be wonne for richesse  
 And some for strokys & some for gentillesse  
 Sumtyme to schewe hese lyghtnesse & maystrie  
 He pleyeth heroudis vp on a skafald hye 3384  
 But what auaylyth hym in þis cas  
 Sche louyth so þis hende Nicolas  
 That Absalon may blowe the bukkys horn  
 He ne hadde for al hese labour but a skorn 3388  
 And sche makyth Absalon here ape  
 And al hese earnest is turnyd tyl a lape  
 fful soth is this prouerbe it is no lye  
 Men seyth ryght þus the nyght alye 3392  
 Makyth the chartere lef to be looth  
 ffor thow that absalon be wod or wroth  
 Be cause þat he fer was from here syght [leaf 179]  
 This nyght Nicholas stod in hese lyght 3396  
 Now bere the wel þou hende nycholas  
 ffor absalon may wepe & synge allas

And so befel it on a satyrday  
 This carpenter was gon to Osenay 3400  
 And hende nycholas & Alysoun  
 Acordede ben to this conclusioun  
 That Nicholas schal schapyn hym a wilo  
 This sely Ielous husbonde to begyle 3404  
 And ȝif so be this game wente aryght  
 Sche schulde slepe in hese armys al nyght  
 ffor this was here desyr & hese also  
 And rygh a-non *with-outyn* wordys mo 3408  
 This nicholas no lengere wolde tarye  
 But doth ful softe vnto hese chambere carye  
 Bothe mete & drynk for a day or tweye  
 And to here husbonde bad here for to seye 3412  
 Ȝif that he axede aftyr Nicholas  
 Sche schulde seye he nyste neuer wher he was  
 Of al þe day sche say hym not *with* ye  
 Sche trowyth þat he was in malady 3416  
 ffor no cry here mayde coude calle  
 He nulde answeere for no thyng that myghte falle  
 This passeth forth al þat satyrday  
 That Nicholas stille in hese chambere lay 3420  
 And et & slep & dede what hym lyst  
 Thil soneday þat the sunne goth to reste  
 This sely carpenter hath so gret merueyle  
 Of Nicholas or what thyng myghte hym eyle 3424  
 And seyde I am adred be seynt thomays  
 It stondyth not a-rygh *with* nycholas  
 God schylde þat he deyede sodeynly  
 This world is now ful tekyl sekyrly 3428  
 I saw to day a cors boryn to scherche  
 That now on moneday last I saugh hym werche  
 Go vp *quod* he vn to hese knaue a-non [leaf 179, back]  
 Clepe at hese dore or knokke *with* a ston 3432  
 Loke how it is & telle me boldely  
 This knaue goth hym vp ful sturdyly



And at the chambere dore whil that he stod  
 He cryede & knokkede as þey he were wod 3436  
 What how what do 3e Maystyr Nicholay  
 How may 3e slepen al the longe day  
 But al for nought he herde not a word  
 An hole he fond ful lowe vp on a bord 3440  
 There as the cat was wont in for to crepe  
 And at the hole he lokede in ful depe  
 And at the laste he hadde of hym a sygh  
 This Nicholas sat alwey gapyng vp rygh 3444  
 As he hadde kykyd on the newe mone  
 Adoun he goth & tolde hese maystyr sone  
 In what aray he saw this ilke man  
 This carpenter to blyssyn hym be-gan 3448  
 And seyde helpe vs seynte frydiswyde  
 A man wot lytyl what hym schal betyde  
 This man is falle with hese astronemye  
 In sum wodnesse or in sum agonye 3452  
 I thoughte ay wel how þat it schulde be  
 Men schulde not knowe of goddis priuete  
 3e blyssede be alwey a lewede man  
 That nought but only his bileue can 3456  
 So ferde a nothyr clerk with astronomye<sup>1</sup> [r: later]  
 He walkede in the feldis for to prie  
 Vp on the sterrys what þere schulde befall  
 Til he was in a marbil pyt I-falle 3460  
 He say not that but 3it be seynt Thomays  
 Me rewyth sore of hende Nycholas  
 He schal be ratyd of hese stodying  
 3if that I may be Ihesu heuene kyng 3464  
 Get me a staf that I may vndyr spore  
 Whil that þou robyn hevyst vp the dore  
 He schal out of hese stodyinge as I gesse [leaf 180]  
 And to the chambere dore he gann hym dresse 3468  
 Hese knave was a strong carl for the nonys  
 And by the haspe he haf it of at onys

And in the flor the dore lay a-non  
 This nycholas sat ay as style as ston 3472  
 And euere gapede vpward in to the eyre  
 This Carpenter wende he hadde <sup>1</sup>ben in dispeyre<sup>1</sup> [1-1 corrected]  
 And hente hym by the schulderis myghtyly  
 And shok hym harde & cryede dispitously 3476  
 What Nicholas what how loke adoun  
 Awake & thynk on crystis pascioun  
 I crouche the from elvys & from whitys<sup>2</sup> [2 corr. to whichys]  
 Therwith the nyght spel<sup>3</sup> a-non ryghtis [3 corr. to ffeol] 3480  
 On foure haluys of the hous aboute  
 And on the throsschewald of the dore with-oute  
 Ihesu cryst & seynt benedyt  
 Blysse this hous from euery wede wygh 3484  
 ffor the nyghtis verie / the white pater noster  
 Where wonyst þou now seynte peterys systyr  
 And at the laste þis hende Nicholas  
 Gan for to syke sore & seyde allas 3488  
 Schal al the world ben lost eftsonys now  
 This carpente answerde what seynst þou  
 What thynk on god as men don whan þey swinke  
 This Nicholas answerde fet me drynke 3492  
 And aftyr wele I speke in prūyte  
 Of serteyn thyng that touchith me & the  
 I wele telle it non oþer man certeyn  
 This carpentyr goth doun & comyth ageyn 3496  
 And broughte of myghti ale a large quart  
 And whanne that eche of hem hade dronke his part  
 This Nicholas hese dore faste schette  
 And doun the Carpenter by hym he sette 3500  
 And seyde Ihun myn ost lef & dere  
 Thow schat vp on thi trouthe swere me here  
 That to no wyght þou schat þis conseyll wreye [leaf 180, back]  
 ffor it is crystis conseyll that I seye 3504  
 And ȝif þou telle it man þou art forlore  
 ffor this veniaunce þou schat han þerfore

That ȝif þou wreye me þou schat ben wod	
Nay cryst forbede for hese holy blood	3508
Quod þ <sup>o</sup> this selye man I nam no labbe	
Ne þow I seye I ne ain not lef to gabbe	
Sey what þou wylt I schal it neuere telle	
To chyld ne wyf by hym that harwede helle	3512
Now Iohn <i>quod</i> Nicholas I nyl not lye	
I haue I-foundyn in myn astronemye	
As I haue lokyd in the mone bryght	
That now a moneday nest at quarter nyght	3516
Schal falle a reyn & that so wilde & wod	
That half so gret was neuere Noyes flod	
This world he seyde in more thn an oure	
Schal be drenk so hydous is the schour	3520
Thus schal mankynde drenche & lese here lyf	
This carpenter answerede allas myn wif	
And schal sche drenche allas myn alysoun	
ffor sorwe of this he fel almost a doun	3524
And seyde is there no remedye in this cas	
Whi ȝis for gode / <i>quod</i> hende Nichola	
ȝif þou wilt werkyn aftyr lore & red	
Thow mayst not werkyn aftyr þyn owene red	3528
ffor thus seyth salamon that was for trewe	
Werk al be conseyl & þou schalt not rew	
And ȝif þou werke wylt be good conseyl	
I vndyrtake <i>withoute</i> mast or sayl	3532
ȝit schal I schaue here & the & me	
Hast þou not herd how sauyd was noe	
Whan þat oure lord hadde warnede hym befor	
Tha al the word <i>with</i> wayr schulde be lorn	3536
ȝis <i>quod</i> this carpenter ful ȝore ago	
Hast þou not herd <i>quod</i> Nicholas also	
The sorwe of Noe <i>with</i> hese felauschepe	[leaf 181]
E[r] þan he myghte gete hese wyf to schepe	3540
Hym hadde ben lefere I dar wel vndyrtake	
Al thilke tyme than hese wederis blake	

That sche hadde had a schep here self a lone  
 And þerto wost þou what is best to done 3544  
 This askyth haste & of an hasty thyng  
 Men may not preche ne make taying  
 Anon go gete vs faste in to þys in  
 A knedyng trow or ellys a kemelyng 3548  
 ffor eche of vs but loke that þey be large  
 I wheche we mowe sweme as in a barge  
 And han þerinne vitayle suffyciaunt  
 But for a day fy on the remenaunt 3552  
 The watyr schal aslake & gon away  
 Aboute pryme on the nexte day  
 But robyn may not wetyn of this thyn knave  
 Ne ek thym maydyn gille I may not sve 3556  
 Axe not whi for thow þou axe me  
 I wele not telle godis priuete  
 Suffyseth þe but ȝif thy wit madde  
 To han as gret a grace as Noe hadde 3560  
 Thyn wif schal I wel saue out of doute  
 Go now thyn wey / & sped the here aboute  
 But whan þou hast for here & þe & me  
 I-getyn vs these knedyng tubbys thre 3564  
 Thanne schat þou hangyn hem in the rof ful hye  
 That no man of oure puryaunce aspye  
 And whan þou hast þus don as I haue seyde  
 And hast oure vitayle fayre in hem leyde 3568  
 And ek an ax to smyte the corde a two  
 Whan that the watyr comyth þat we may goo  
 And breke an hole an hey vp on the gable  
 Into the gardynward ouer the stabele 3572  
 That we mowe frely passe forth ore way  
 Whan that the grete schour is gon a-way  
 Than schat þou sweme as merye I vndyrtake [leaf 181, back]  
 As doth the white doke after the drake 3576  
 Thanne wele I clepe how alisoun how Ion  
 Be merye for the flod wele passe a-non



And þou wit seyn heyl maystyr Nicholay  
 Good morwe for I se þ<sup>e</sup> wel for it is day 3580  
 And thanne schul we be lordys al oure lyue  
 Of al the world as Noe was & hese wyue  
 But of a<sup>1</sup> thyng I warne the ful ryght [1 a later]  
 Be wel auysed on þat ilke nyght 3584  
 That we ben enteryd in to schepys bord  
 That non of vs ne speke not a word  
 Ne clepe ne crye but ben in hese preyere  
 ffor it is goddys owene heste dere 3588  
 Thyn wyf & þou motyn hangyn fer a twen  
 ffor that be-twixe 3ow schal ben no syn  
 No more in lokyng þan þere schal in dede  
 This ordenaunce is seyð go god þ<sup>e</sup> spede 3592  
 To morwe at nyght whan we ben alle aslepe  
 In to oure knedyng tulbis we schul crepe  
 And sittynge þere abydyng goddys grace  
 Go now þyn way I ne haue no lengere space 3596  
 To make of thys no lengere sarmounnyng  
 Men seyth þus / synd þ<sup>e</sup> wyse & sey no þyng  
 Thow art so wys it nedyth þ<sup>e</sup> not teche  
 Go saue oure lyf & that I þ<sup>e</sup> beseche 3600  
 This sely carpenter goth forth hese way  
 fful ofte he seyde allas & welle away  
 And to hese wif he tolde hese priuyte  
 And sche was war & knew it bet þan he 3604  
 What al this queynte cast was for to say  
 But neuertheles sche ferde as sche wolde day  
 And seyde allas go forth þyn waye a-non  
 Help vs to skape / er we ben dede eche on 3608  
 I am thyn verray trewe weddede wyf  
 Go dere spouse & help to saue oure lyf  
 Lo which a gret thyng is affeeyoun [leaf 182]  
 Men may deye thour Imagynacyoun 3612  
 So depe may impressioun be take  
 This sely Carpenter begynnyth to quake

Hym thynkyth verayly þat he may se  
 Noyous flod come walwyng as the se 3616  
 To drenchyn alysoun hese hony dere  
 He wepyth waylyth makyth sory chere  
 He sykyth with manye a sory swough  
 And goth & getyth hym a knedyng trough 3620  
 And aftyr a tubbe & a kemelyn  
 And pryuyly he sente hem to hese in  
 And hyng hem in the rof in priuyte  
 With his owene hand he made ladderys thre 3624  
 To klymbyn bi þ<sup>e</sup> rounGIS & the stalkys  
 On to the tubbe hangyng in the balkis  
 And hem vitaylede bothe trow & tubbe  
 With bred & chese with good alle in a tubbe 3628  
 Suffysyng rygh I-now as for a day  
 But er he hadde mad al thys aray  
 He sente hese knaue & ek hese wenche also  
 Vp on hese nedis to lundene for to go 3632  
 And on the moneday whan it drow to nyght  
 He schette hese dore with-outyn cande le lygh  
 And dressede alle thyng as it schulde be  
 And schortly vp they clumbe alle thre 3636  
 They setyn sty l le wel a furlong wey  
 Now pater noster clum seyde Nicholay  
 And clum quod Ion & clum quod Alysoun  
 This carpentyr seyde hese deuocoun 3640  
 And sty l le he sit & biddyth hese preyere  
 Awaytyng on the reyn 3if he it here  
 The dede slep for verray besynesse  
 ffel on this Carpentyr rygh as I gesse 3644  
 A-boute corfeu tyme or lyte more  
 ffor trauayl<sup>1</sup> of hese gost he groynede sore [1: later]  
 And efft he routyth for hese hed mys lay [leaf 182, back]  
 Doun on the laddere stalkyth Nicholay 3648  
 And Alysoun ful softe a doun sche spedde  
 With-outyn wordys mo þey gon to bedde

There as the carpentyr is wone to lye  
 There was the reuel & the melodye 3652  
 And þus lyth alysoun & Nycholas  
 In besynesse of merthe & of solas  
 Tyl þat the belle of laudis gan to ryng  
 And frerys in the schauinsel gunne synge 3656  
 Thys parich clerk this Amerouse Absalon  
 That is for loue alwey so wo begon  
 Vp on the moneday was at oseneye  
 With cumpanye hym to disporte & pleye 3660  
 And axede vp on cas a cloysterer  
 fful priuily aftyr Ion the carpenter  
 And he drow hym a part out of the cherche  
 And seyde I saw here not werche 3664  
 Syn satyrday I trowe that he be went  
 ffor tymbyr þere oure abbot hath hym sent  
 ffor he is wont for tymbyr for to go  
 And dwellyn at the graunge a day or too 3668  
 Or eft he is at hese hous serteyn  
 Where that he be I can not sothly seyn  
 This absalon ful Ioly was & lyght  
 And thoughte now is tyme to wakyn al nygh 3672  
 ffor sekyrly I say hym not sterynge  
 A-boutyn hese dore tyl day be-gan to sprynge  
 So mot I the I schal at cokkys crowe  
 fful priuily knocke at hese wyndowe 3676  
 That stant ful lowe vndyr hese bourys wal  
 To alysoun now wele I tellyn al  
 Myn loue longynge for ȝit I schal not mysse  
 That at the leste weye I schal here kysse 3680  
 Sum maner confort schal I haue parfay  
 Myn mouth hath ȝechid al þis longe day  
 That is a sygne of kyssynge at the leste [leaf 183]  
 Al nyght me mette I was at a feste 3684  
 Therefore I wele go slepe an oure or tweye  
 And al the nyght þanne wele I wake & pleye

Whan that the ferste Cok hath crowe a-non  
 Vp rist this Ioly louere this absalon 3688  
 And hym arayep gay at poyn deuyse  
 But fyrst he schewith greyn & licorys  
 To smelle sote er he hadde kemb his her  
 Vndyr hese tunge a trewe loue he ber 3692  
 ffor therby wende he to be gracious  
 He romyth to the carpenterys hous  
 And stille he stant vndyr the schot wyndowe  
 Vn to hese brest it raught it was so lowe 3696  
 And softe he coude *with* a semy soun  
 What do 3e hony komb 3e swete alysoun  
 Myn fayre bryd myn swete synamome  
 Awakyth leman myn & spekyth to me 3700  
 Wol lytil thynkyn 3e vp on myn wo  
 That for 3oure loue I swete pere I go  
 No wondyr ist þow I swalte & swete  
 I morne as doth a lamb after þ<sup>e</sup> tete 3704  
 I-wis leman I haue so meche loue longyng  
 That lik a turtele I trowe is myn mornyng  
 I may not ete no more þan a mayde  
 Go from the wyndowe Iakke fol sche sayde 3708  
 As helpe me god it wele not be cumpame  
 I loue a-nothir & ell I were to blame  
 Wel bet þan þ<sup>e</sup> be Ihesu Absalon  
 Go forth þyn way or I wele caste a ston 3712  
 And let me slepe a twenty dele wey  
 Allas *quod* absalon & welleaway  
 That trewe loue was euere so euele be-set  
 Than kys me syn it may be no bet 3716  
 ffor Ihesus<sup>1</sup> loue & for the loue of me [1 MS Ihe]  
 Wilt þou þanne go thyn wey therewith *quod* sche  
 3a certis lemman *quod* þis absalon [leaf 183, back]  
 Thanne mak þ<sup>e</sup> redi *quod* sche I come anon 3720  
 [ . . . . .  
 . . . . . no gap in the MS.]  
 This Absalon sette hym down on hese kneis



And seyde I am a lord at alle degreis 3724  
 ffor after this I hope *pere* comyth more  
 leman thyn grace & swete bryd *pyn* ore  
 The wyndowe sche ondoth & that in haste  
 Haue don *quod* sche come of & sped *p<sup>e</sup>* faste 3728  
 Lest that thyn neyhebouris *p<sup>r</sup>* aspye  
 This absalon gan wype his mouth ful drye  
 Derk was the nyght as pouche or as the cole  
 And out at the wyndowe sche putte here ars hole 3732  
 And absalon fel ney~~per~~ bet no~~per~~ wers  
 But with hese mouth he kyste here nakede ars  
 fful sauourly er he were war of this  
 A bakke he styrt & thouthe it was a mys 3736  
 ffor wel he wiste a woman hadde no berd  
 He felte a thyng al row & long I-heryd  
 And seyde fy allas what haue I do  
 Te he *quod* sche & claptte here wyndowe to 3740  
 And absalon goth forth a sory pas  
 A berd a berd *quod* hynde Nicholas  
 Bi goddis corpius this goth fayre & wel  
 This sely absalon herde euerydel 3744  
 And on his lippe he gan for angryr bite  
 And to hym self he seyde I schal *p<sup>e</sup>* quyte  
 Who rubbyth now ho frotyth now hese lippis  
 With dust with sond with straw with cloth with schippis  
 But absolon *pat* seyth ful ofte allas  
 Myn soule be-take I onto saternas  
 But me were betere *pan* al this toun *quod* he  
 Of *pis* dispyt a-wrokyn for to be 3752  
 Allas *quod* he allas why ne hadde I bleynt  
 Hese hote loue was cold & al I-queynt  
 ffor from that tyme that he hadde kyst his ers  
 Of paramour he sette not a kres 3756  
 ffor he was heled of hese maladye [leaf 184]  
 fful ofte paramouris he gan defye  
 And wepte as doth a chyld *pat* is I-bete  
 A softe pas he wente ouer the strete 3760

Vn tyl a smyth men clepedyn daun Ieruys  
 That in hese forge he smethede plow harneys  
 He scharpith schar & cultyr besyly  
 This absalon knokyth al besyly 3764  
 And seyde ondo Geruays & þat a-non  
 What ho art þou it am I Absalon  
 What Absalon what crystis swete tre  
 Whi ryse ȝe so rathe ey benedicyte 3768  
 What eylyth ȝow sum gay gerl god it wot  
 Hath brouȝt ȝow þus vp on the merytot  
 This Absolon ne roughete not a bene  
 Be seynte note ȝe wete wel what I mene 3772  
 Of al this pley no word he ne spak  
 He hadde more tow on hese rak  
 Whan geruays knew & seyde fren so dere  
 That hote cultyr in the chemene here 3776  
 As lene it me I haue þerwith to done  
 I wele bryngyn it þ<sup>e</sup> a-geyn ful sone  
 Gerueys answerede sertis were it gold  
 Or in a poke nobellys al ontold 3780  
 Thu schuldyst haue as I am trewe smyth  
 Ey cristis foo what wele ȝe do þerwith  
 Ther-of quod Alsalon be as be may  
 I schal wel telle it þ<sup>e</sup> to morwe day 3784  
 And caughte þ<sup>e</sup> cultyr by the colde stele  
 fful softe out at þ<sup>e</sup> dore hym gan stele  
 And wente vnto þ<sup>e</sup> carpenterys wal  
 He knokyth fyrst & kallyth<sup>1</sup> þerwithal [1 corr.] 3788  
 Vp on þ<sup>e</sup> wyndowe rygh as he dede er  
 This alysoun answerde ho is ther  
 That knokyst so I warent the a thef  
 Why nay quod he god wot myn swete lef 3792  
 I am thyn absalon myn derelyng [leaf 184, back]  
 Of gold quod he I haue þ<sup>e</sup> brought a ryng  
 Myn modyr ȝaf it me so god me saue  
 fful fyn it is & þerto wel I-graue 3796

This wele I zeuen þ<sup>e</sup> 3if I þ<sup>e</sup> kysse  
 This Nicholas was resyn for to pysse  
 And thouthe he wolde a-mendyn al þ<sup>e</sup> Iape  
 He schulde kysse hese ars er þan he spake 3800  
 And vp the wyndowe dede he hastily  
 And out hese ars he puttyth pryuyly  
 Ouer the buttok / to þ<sup>e</sup> haunche bon  
 And þerwith spak this absoloun 3804  
 Spek swete brid I not where þou art  
 This Nicholas a-non let flye a fart  
 As gret as it hadde ben a thondyr dent  
 And with þ<sup>e</sup> strok he was almost I-blent 3808  
 And he was redy with hese yryn hot  
 And Nicholas a mydde þ<sup>e</sup> ars he smot  
 Off goth the skyn<sup>1</sup> / an hande brede aboute (1 corrected)  
 The hote cultyr / brende so hese toute 3812  
 And for the smert he wende for to deye  
 As he were wod / for wo he gan to crye  
 Help watyr watyr / help for godys herte  
 This carpenter / out of hese slombir sterte 3816  
 And herde on cryen / watyr as he were wod  
 And thoughte allas now comyth Neweþ flod (2 þ Nowel)  
 He sit hym vp with/oute wordys mo  
 And with hese ax / he smette the corde on to 3820  
 A doun he<sup>3</sup> fel.<sup>3</sup> he fond no<sup>3</sup> thyng<sup>3</sup> to selle (3 corrected)  
 Neyþer bred ne ale / Ne no thyng elle  
 Vp on the flor / & þere aswounne he lay  
 Vp styrted here Alysoun & nycholay 3824  
 And cryedyn out / harrow in the strete  
 The neygheborys boþ<sup>e</sup> smale & grete  
 In ronne for to gauryn on þis man.  
 That 3it a swounne he lay boþ<sup>e</sup> pale & wan. [Cambridge stops till  
 l. 3891.]  
 ffor with that fal he brusten hath his arme [Sloane MS 1635,  
 leaf 43]  
 But stonden he must vnto his owne harme  
 ffor whanne he spak he was anoon bore doun  
 With hynde Nicholas and Alisoun 3832

Thei tolde euery man that he was wood  
 He was a-gast' so of' the Nowels flood  
 Thurgh fantasie that' of his vanyte  
 He hadde bought hym kneding' tubbes three 3836  
 And hadde hem hanged in the roof aboue  
 And that he praiede hem for goddis loue  
 To sitten in the roof' par companye  
 The folk gan laughwen at' his fantasie 3840  
 And to the roof' thei kiken and thei gape  
 And turned al his harm vnto a Iape  
 ffor what' this carpentere answerde  
 It' was for nought' no man his resoun herde 3844  
 With othes gret' he was sworne adoun  
 That he was holden wood in al that' toun  
 ffor euery clerk anoon right' helde with other  
 Thei seide the man is wood my leue brother 3848  
 And euery wight' gan laughwen at' his stryf  
 Thus swyued was the carpenters wyf  
 ffor al his kepyng' and his Ialousie [leaf 43, back]  
 And Absolon hath kist' hir' nethir ye 3852  
 And Nicholas is scaldid in his toute  
 This tale is don and god saue al the route  
**Explicit fabula molendinarij.**

[No break in the MS.]

[Of leaf 85, the Cambridge MS has only cas l. 3855, pleye, l. 3858,  
and greue l. 3859.]

¶ Heere bigynneth the prolog<sup>t</sup> of the Reues Tale. <sup>[Sloane MS. 1685]</sup>

**W**Hanne folk han laughwen at<sup>t</sup> this nyce cas  
 Of Absolon and hynde Nicholas 3856  
 Dyuerse folk<sup>t</sup> dyuersely they seide  
 But<sup>t</sup> for the more part<sup>t</sup> thei lough and pleyde  
 Ne at<sup>t</sup> this tale I saw no man him greue  
 But<sup>t</sup> it<sup>t</sup> were oonly Oswold the Reue 3860  
 By cause he was of<sup>t</sup> Carpenteres craft<sup>t</sup>  
 A litel ire is in his herte laft<sup>t</sup>  
 He gan to grucche and blamede it a lite  
 So the yk<sup>t</sup> quod he ful wel kouthe I 3ou quite 3864  
 With blering<sup>t</sup> of a proude mellers ye  
 If<sup>t</sup> that<sup>t</sup> me list<sup>t</sup> to speke of<sup>t</sup> rybaudye  
 But<sup>t</sup> yk am old me list<sup>t</sup> not<sup>t</sup> pleye for age  
 Gras tyme is don my foddere is forage 3868  
 This white top writeth myn olde 3eres  
 Myn herte is al so mouled as myn heres  
 But<sup>t</sup> if I fare as doth an openers  
 That<sup>t</sup> ilk<sup>t</sup> fruyt<sup>t</sup> is euere lenger the wers 3872  
 Til it be roten in mullok<sup>t</sup> or in stree  
 We olde men I drede so fare we  
 Til we be roten can we nought<sup>t</sup> be ripe  
 We hoppen alweye while the world wil pipe 3876  
 ffor in oure wille ther stiketh euere a naile  
 To haue an hoor her / and a grene taile  
 As hath a leek . for though oure might<sup>t</sup> be gon  
 Oure wille desireth folye euere in oon 3880  
 ffor whanne we may nought<sup>t</sup> don than wil we speke  
 3it<sup>t</sup> in oure asshen old<sup>t</sup> is fire reke  
 ffoure gledes haue we whiche I shal diuise  
 Anauntynge . liyng<sup>t</sup> . Angre . Coueitise 3884  
 These ffoure sparkles longith vnto elde [leaf 40]  
 Oure olde lymes mowe wel be vnwelde



But wille ne shal not failen that is soth [Sloane MS 1685]  
 And ȝit haue I alwey a coltes toth 3888  
 As many a ȝere as it is passed henne  
 Sith that my tappe of lyf bigan to renne [Sloane extract ends.]  
 ffor sekyrly whan I was boryn anon [Cambr. MS. Gg 4. 27, ff 186]  
 Deth drow þ<sup>e</sup> tappe of lyf & let it gon 3892  
 And euere sithe hath so þ<sup>e</sup> tappe Ironne  
 Til þat almost al emty is þ<sup>e</sup> tunne  
 The strem of lyf now droppith on þ<sup>e</sup> chymbe  
 The sely tunge may wel rynge & chymbe 3896  
 Of wrechedenesse þat passede is ful ȝore  
 With olde folk saue dotage is no more  
 Whan þat þ<sup>e</sup> ost hadde herd this sarmounnyng  
 He gan to spek as lordly as a kyng 3900  
 He seyde what amountyth al þis wit  
 What schul we speke al day of holy writ  
 The deuyl made a reue for to preche  
 And of a soutere schipman or a leche 3904  
 Sey forth thyn tale & tarye not þ<sup>e</sup> tyme  
 Lo Depeforthe & it is half weye pryme  
 Lo Grenewych þere manye a schrewe is inne  
 It were hey tyme þyn tale to begynne 3908  
 Now serys *quod* this Osowold the reue  
 I preye ȝow alle þat ȝe nat ȝow greue  
 Thow I answeere & sumdel sette hese howe  
 ffor lefful it is þat forse / forse of schowe 3912  
 This dronkene mellere hath I-told vs here  
 How þat begiled was a carpentere  
 Parauenture in scorn for I am on  
 And by ȝoure leue I schal ȝow quyte a-non 3916  
 Ryght in hese cherlis termys wele I speke  
 I preye to god his nelke mote breke  
 He can wel in myn eye sen a stalke  
 But in hese owene he can not sen a balke 3920

Here begynnyth the <sup>[head of  
painting of  
the Reeve]</sup> Rene his tale

**A** T Trompyngtoun not fer fram cantabregge [leaf 186, back]  
 þere goth a brok & ouer þat a bregge  
 Vp on þ<sup>e</sup> which brok þer stant a melle  
 And this is veray soth þat I 3ou telle 3924  
 A mellere was þer dwellynge many a day  
 As ony pekok he was proud & gay  
 Pype he coude and fyssche and netys beete  
 And turne cuppis & wel wrestele & schete 3928  
 Ay by hese belte he bar a long panade  
 And of a swerd ful trenchaunt was the blade  
 A Ioly poppere bar he in hese pouche  
 Ther was no man for peryl durste hym touche 3932  
 A sheffeld Thwytel bar he in hese hose  
 Round was hese face & kammede was hese nose  
 As pelyd as an ape was hese skolle  
 He was a markat betere at þ<sup>e</sup> fulle 3936  
 There durste no wygh hand vp on hym leye <sup>[1 ye corrected]</sup>  
 That he ne swor þat he schulde anon a-beye <sup>1</sup>  
 A thef he was for sothe of corn & mele  
 And þat a sly & vsaunt for to stele 3940  
 And his name was hotyn deynous symkyn  
 A wif he hadde comyn of noble kyn  
 The persoun of the toun here fadyr was  
 Witþ here he 3af ful many a peny of bras 3944  
 ffor þat Symkyn schulde in hese blod alye  
 Sche was fostered in a nunnerye  
 ffor Symkyn wolde no wyf as he seyde  
 But sche were wel Inoryschid & a mayde 3948  
 To saunyn hese estat of 3emanrye  
 And sche was proud & pert as is a pye  
 A ful fayr syghte was it on hem to  
 On holye dayis be-forn here wolde he ge 3952

With hese typet boundyn a-boutyn hese hed  
 And sche come aftyr in a gite of red  
 And symkyn hadde hosyn of the same  
 Ther durste no wygh clepyn here but dame 3956  
 Was non hardy þat wente be þ<sup>e</sup> weye [leaf 187]  
 That durste *with* here rage or onys pleye  
 But ȝif he wolde be slayn of symkyn  
 With panade or knyf or boytekyn 3960  
 ffor Ielous folk ben perelous euere mo  
 Algate þey wolde here wyuys wenden so  
 And ek for sche was sumwhat smotyrylch  
 Sche was as dygne as watyr In a dich 3964  
 And ful of hokyr & of bismerye  
 Sche thoughte þat a lady schulde here spareye  
 What for here kynrede & here Norterye  
 That sche hadde lerned in þ<sup>e</sup> nunnerye 3968  
 A doughtyr hadde þey be-twixe hem too  
 Of twenty ȝer *with-outyn* ony moo  
 Sauynge a chyld þat was of sene ȝer age  
 In cradil it lay & was a propre page 3972  
 This wenche thikke & wel I-growyn was  
*With* cammuse nose & eyen greye as glas  
 Buttokkys brode & brestis rounde & hye  
 But rygh fayr was here her I wele not lye 3976  
 This persoun of the toun for sche was so fayr  
 In purpos was to makyn here hese eyr  
 But of hese catel & hese mesewage  
 And straunge he made it of here maryge 3980  
 Hese purpos was for to be-stowe here hye  
 In to sum worthi blod of aunceterye  
 ffor holicherche good / mote ben dispendit  
 On holy cherchis blod / þat is dessendit 3984  
 þerfore he wolde / hese holy blod honoure  
 Thow þat he holy cherche / schulde devoure  
 Gret sokene hath / this mellere out of doute  
*With* whete & malt / of al the lond a-boute 3988

And namely þere was a gret college  
 Men clepyth þ<sup>e</sup> soler halle at cantebrege  
 There was heyre whete & here malt I-grounde  
 And on a day it happede in a stounde 3992  
 Sek lay þ<sup>e</sup> mauncypele on a malady [leaf 187, back]  
 Men wendyn wisely þat he schulde dey  
 ffor which this mellere stal bothe mele & corn  
 An hundere tyme more þan be-forn 3996  
 ffor þere be-forn he stal but curteysly  
 But now he was a thef outrageously  
 ffor whych þe wardeyn schod & made fare  
 But therof sette this mellere not a tare 4000  
 He crakyth bost & swor it was not so  
 þanne were there pore clerkys too  
 That dwelledyn in þis halle of whiche I seyde  
 Testyf þey were & lusty for to pleye 4004  
 And only for here myrthe & reuerye  
 Vp on þ<sup>e</sup> wardeyn besily þey crye  
 To ȝeue hem leue but a lite stounde  
 To gon to melle / to sen here corn I-grounde 4008  
 And hardely þey durste leyn here nekke  
 The mellere schulde not stele hem half a pekke  
 Of corn be sleyghte ne be forse hem reue  
 And at þ<sup>e</sup> laste þ<sup>e</sup> wardeyn ȝaf hem leue 4012  
 Ion highte þat on & aleyn hyghte þat oþer  
 Of on toun were þey born þat hyghte strother  
 ffer in the north I can not tellyn where  
 This aleyn makyth redy al hese gere 4016  
 And on an hors he caste þ<sup>e</sup> sak a-non  
 Forth goth aleyn þ<sup>e</sup> clerk & also Ion  
 With good swerd & bokeler bi here syde  
 Ion knew þe weye hem nedyth no gyde 4020  
 And at þ<sup>e</sup> melle þ<sup>e</sup> sak a-doun he leyth  
 Aleyn spak fyrst alheyl symound in feyth  
 How farys þyn fayre douȝtyr & thyn wif  
 Aleyn wolcome quod symkyn be myn lyf 4024

And Iohn also how now what do 3e here  
 Symond *quod* Iohn bi god nede has no pere  
 He muste serue hym self þat has no sweyn  
 Or ellis he is a fol as clerkis seyn 4028  
 Oure maunciple I hope he wele be ded [leaf 188]  
 Swa werkis ay / þ<sup>e</sup> wangis in hese hed  
 And þerfore is I come & ek aleyn  
 To grynde oure corn & carie it hom a-geyn 4032  
 I prey 3ow spede vs hene as 3e may  
 It schal be don *quod* symkyn be myn fay  
 What wel 3e don whil þat it is in hande  
 By god ry3t by þ<sup>e</sup> hopyr wele I stande 4036  
 Quod Ion & sen how þ<sup>e</sup> corn goth in  
 3it saw I neuere be myn fadir kyn  
 How þat þe hopir wagis to & fra  
 Aleyn answerede & seyde wist þou swa 4040  
 Thanne wele I be beneth bi myn croun  
 And sen how þat þ<sup>e</sup> mele fallyth don  
 In to þe trow þat schal ben myn dysport  
 ffor Iohn yfayth I may ben of 3ore sort 4044  
 I is as ille a mellere as is 3e  
 This mellere smylede of here nysetee  
 And thou3te al þis it nys don but for a wyle  
 They wene þat no man may hem be-gyle 4048  
 But be myn thryft / 3it wele I blere here ye  
 ffor al þe sle3te in here filosofye  
 The more queynte crokede þat þey make  
 The more wele I stele whan I take 4052  
 In stede of flour / 3it wele I 3eue hēm bren  
 The gretteste clerkys ben not wyseste men  
 As whilom to þe wolf þus spak þe mare  
 Of al here art I counte not a tare 4056  
 Out at þe dore he goth ful pruyly  
 Whan þat he saw hese tyme softly  
 He lokyth vp & doun tyl he haue founde  
 The clerkys hors þere as it stod I-bounde 4060



Be-hynde þe melle vndyr a leuesel  
 And to þe hors he goth fayre & wel  
 He strepith of þe brydil rygħt a-non  
 And whan þe hors was los he gynnyth gon . 4064  
 Toward þe fen þere wilde marys renne [leaf 188, back]  
 And forth with wehe þour theke & thorw thenne  
 This mellere gooth a-ȝen / no word he seyde  
 But doth his note & with þe clerkis pleyede 4068  
 Til þat here corn was wel & fayre grounde  
 And whan þe mele is salkyd & I-bounde  
 This Ioħn goth out & fynt his hors away  
 And gan to crye harow & weyleaway 4072  
 Oure hors is lorn aleyn for godys bonys  
 Step on thyn foot Aleyn come of atonys  
 Allas oure wardeyn has hese palfrey lorn  
 This aleyn for-gat bothe mele & corn 4076  
 Al was out of hese mynde hese hosebondrye  
 What whedir is he gon he gan to crye  
 The wyf cam lepyng in ward with a ren  
 Sche seyde alas ȝoure hors goth to þe fen 4080  
 Wyth wylde marys as faste as sche may go  
 Vn-thank come on hese hand þat bond hym so  
 And he þat betere schulde a knyht þe reyne  
 Allas quod aleyn for crystis peyne 4084  
 Ley doun þyn swerd / & I wele myn al swa  
 I is ful wyȝt god woot as is a raa  
 By goddis herte / he schal nat skape vs baþe  
 Whi ne haddist þou pit þe capyl in þe lathe 4088  
 Ille hayl aleyn be god þou is a fonne  
 These sely clerkis han ful faste I-ronne  
 Toward þe fen / bothe aleyn & ek Ioħn  
 And whan þe mellere saw þat þey were gon 4092  
 He half a buschel of here flour hath take  
 And bad hese wif gon knede it in a kake  
 He seyde I trowe þe clerkys were a-feryd  
 ȝit can a mellere make a clerkys berd 4096

ffor al here art now lat hem gon here woye  
 Lo where he goth þat lat þe childeryn pleye  
 They gete hym not so lyztely / be myn croun  
 These sely clerkys rennen vp & down 4100  
 Wyth kep kep / stand stand stand Iossa ware þe rere [leaf 189]  
 Ga whystelete thow & I schal kepe hym here  
 But schortly til þat it was veray nyght  
 They coude not Thow they don al here myzt 4104  
 Here capil cache he ran al wey so faste  
 Tyl in a dych þey caughte hym at þe laste  
 Wery & wet as beste is in þe reyn  
 Comyth sely ion & with hym comyth aleyn 4108  
 Allas quod Iohn þe day þat I was born  
 Now are we dreuyn tyl hethng & to scorn  
 Oure corn is stole men wele vs folys calle  
 Boþe þe wardayn & oure felas alle 4112  
 And namely þe mellere weyleawey  
 Thus pleynyth Iohn as he goth be þe wey  
 Toward þe melle / & bayard in hese hond  
 The mellere sittynge by þe fyr he fond 4116  
 ffor it was nyzt & ferþere myzte þey nought  
 But for þe loue of god þey hym be-sought  
 Of herberwe & of ese for here peny  
 The mellere seyde a-geyn 3if þere be eny 4120  
 Swich as it is 3it schal 3e haue 3oure part  
 Myn hous is streyt but 3e han lernede art  
 3e cunne with argumentis make a place  
 A myle brod of twenty fote of space 4124  
 Let se now 3if þis space may suffyse  
 Or make it roum with speche as is 3oure gyse  
 Now symond seyde Iohn be seynt Cutbert  
 Ay art þou merye & þis is fayre answeyd 4128  
 I haue herd seyde men schal tan of too thyngis  
 Swich as he fynd or take swich as he bryngis  
 But specially I preye þe hoot & deere  
 Gete vs sum mete & drynk & make vs chere 4132

And we wele paye trewely at þe folle  
 With emty hand men may none haukys tolle  
 Lo here oure syluyr / redy for to spende  
 This mellere in to þe tounne hese doughtyr sende 4136  
 ffor ale & bred & rostede hem a goos [leaf 189, back]  
 And bond here hors it schulde not gon loos  
 And in hese owene chaumbir made a bed  
 With schetis & with chalounnys fayre I-spred 4140  
 Not from his owene bed ten fote or twelve  
 Hese douȝtyr hadde a bed al by here selue  
 Rygh in þe same schaumbyr by & by  
 It myȝte ben no bet & cause why 4144  
 There was non roumere herberw in þe plase  
 The soupe & þey speke hem to solase  
 And dronkyn ay strong ale at þe beste  
 Aboute medenyȝt wente þey to reste 4148  
 Wel hath this mellere vernychid hese hed  
 fful pale he was for-drunke & not red  
 He ȝyksneth & spekyth þourw þe nose  
 As he were on þe quakke or on þe pose 4152  
 To bedde he goþ & with hym goth his wif  
 As ony iay sche lyȝt was & iolyf  
 So was here ioly whistele wel I-wet  
 The cradil at here beddys feet is set 4156  
 To rokke & to ȝeue þe child to souke  
 And whan þat dronkyn al was in þe crouke  
 To bedde wente þe douȝtyr ryȝt a-non  
 To bedde goth aleyn & ek Ioħn 4160  
 Ther nas no mor hem neded no dwale  
 This mellere hath so wysely bibbit alle  
 That as an hors he snortyth in hese slep  
 Ne of hese tayl ne takyth he no kep 4164  
 Hese wif bar hym a burdoun a ful strong  
 Men myȝtyn here hyre route too furlong  
 The wenche routyth ek par cumpaynye  
 Aleyn þe clerk þat herde þis melodye 4168

He pokede ion & seyde slepist þou  
 Herdist þou euere swich a song er now  
 Lo swich a copil is a-mong hem alle  
 A wylde fyr mote on here bodyis falle 4172  
 Ho herkenyth euere swich a ferly thyng [leaf 190]  
 3a þey schal haue þe flour of ille endyng  
 This longe nyzt þere tydis me no reste  
 But 3it no fors al schal ben for the beste 4176  
 ffor Iohn seyde he as euere mote I thryue  
 3if þat I may þe wenche wele I schryue  
 Sum esement has lawe I-schapyn vs  
 ffor Iohn þere is a lawe þat says þus 4180  
 That 3if a man in a poynt be a-greuyd  
 That in a noþer he schal ben releuyd  
 Oure corn is stolin schortly it is non nay  
 And we han had an ille fit al þis day 4184  
 And syn I schal han non a-mendement  
 A-geyn my los I wele haue eysement  
 By godys sale it schal non oþer be  
 This Iohn answerde Aley a-vise þe 4188  
 The mellere is a perlyous man he seyde  
 And 3if þat he out of hese slep a-breyde  
 He myzte vs don bothe a velanye  
 Alyn answerde I counte hym not a flye 4192  
 And vp he sterte & by þe wenche he crepte  
 This wenche lay vp ryght .i. faste slepte  
 Tyl he so nygh was er sche myghte aspye  
 That it hadde be to late for to crye 4196  
 And schortely for to seyn þey were at on  
 Now pley aleyn for I wele speke of ion  
 This Iohn lyth styлле a furlong wey or too  
 And to hym self he makyth reuthe & woo 4200  
 Allas quod he þis is a wekede iape  
 Now may I seyn þat I is but an ape  
 3it hath myn felawe sumwhat for hese harm  
 He has þe melleris douztyr in hese arm 4204

He auntered hym & has hese nedis sped  
 And I lye as a draf sek in myn bed  
 And whan pis iape is told a noþer day  
 I schal ben told a daffe a cokenay 4208  
 I wele ryse & antere it be myn fay [leaf 190, back]  
 Vn-hardi is vn-sely þus men say  
 And vp he ros & softely he wente  
 Vn to þe cradil & in hese hond it hente 4212  
 And bar it softe vn to hese bedis feet  
 Sone aftyr þis þe wyf here routyng let  
 And gan to wake & lefte for to pysse  
 And cam a-geyn & gan here cradil mysse 4216  
 And gropede here & þere / but sche fond non  
 Allas *quod* sche I hadde almost mys gon  
 I hadde al most gon to þe clerkys bed  
 Ey benedyste þanne hadde I foule I-sped 4220  
 And forth sche goth tyl sche þe cradel fond  
 Sche gropede alwey ferþere with here hond  
 And fond þe bed & thouȝte not but good  
 Be cause þat þe cradyl by it stod 4224  
 And nyste where sche was for it was derk  
 And fayre & wel sche crep in bi þe clerk  
 And lyth ful styлле & wolde a cauȝt a slep  
 With-inne a while þis Iohn vp lep 4228  
 And on þis goode wif he leyth on sore  
 So merye a fit ne hadde sche ful ȝore  
 He prikyth harde & sore as he were mad  
 This ioly lyf han þese too klerkis lad 4232  
 Tyl þat þe fyrste kok be-gan to synge  
 Aleyn wex wery in þe dawenyng  
 ffor he hadde swonkyn al þe longe nyȝt  
 And seyde farwel malyn swete wyȝt 4236  
 The day is come I may no lengere byde  
 But enere more where so I go or ryde  
 I is þyn owene clerk so haue I sel  
 Now dere leman *quod* sche go fare weel 4240



But er þou go on thyng I wele þe telle  
 Whan þat þou wendyst homward be þe melle  
 Ryȝt at þe entre of þe dore be-hynde [leaf 191]  
 þou schat a cake of half a buschel fynde 4244  
 þat was I-makyd ryȝt of þyn owene mele  
 Which þat I halp myn fadyr for to stele  
 And goode leman god þe saue & kepe  
 And with þat word sche gan almost to wepe 4248  
 Aleyn vp ryst & thoughte er þan it dawe  
 I wele gon crepe in by myn felawe  
 And fond þe cradyl with hese hand a-non  
 By god þouȝte he al wrong I haue mys gon 4252  
 Myn hed is toty of myn swynk to nyȝt  
 þat makyth me þat I go not aryȝt  
 I wot wel by þe cradyl I haue mys go  
 Here lyth þe mellere & hese wyf also 4256  
 And forth he goth a twenty deleway  
 Vn to þe bed þere þat þe mellere lay  
 He wende a crepid bi hese felawe Ion  
 An by þe mellere in he crepede a-non 4260  
 And cauȝte hym by þe nekke softe he spak  
 He seyde þou Iohn þou sweuenyst a-wak  
 ffor cristis soule & here a nobele game  
 ffor by þat lord þat called is seynt Iame 4264  
 As I haue thryes in þe schorte nyȝt  
 Swyuyd þe melleris douȝtyr bolt vp ryȝt  
 Whil þou hast as a caward been a-gast  
 ȝa false harlot quod þe mellere hast 4268  
 A false traytour false clerk quod he  
 Thow schat ben ded be godis dynete  
 Ho durste ben so bold to disparage  
 Myn douȝtyr þat is comyn of swych lenage 4272  
 And by the throte bolle he caughte aleyn  
 And he hente hym dyspitously a-geyn  
 And on þe nose he smot hym with hese fest  
 Doun ran þe blod strem vp on hese brest 4276

And in þe floor with nose & mouth to-broke  
 They walwe as don too piggis in a poke  
 And vp þey gon & don a-geyn a-non [leaf 191, back]  
 Tyl þat þe mellere spurnede aȝen a ston 4280  
 And doun he fyl bakward vp on hese wif  
 That wiste no þyng of þis nyse stryf  
 ffor sche was falle a slepe a lyte wyȝht  
 With Iohn þe clerk þat wakede al nyȝt 4284  
 And with þe fal out of here slep sche bryde  
 Help holy croys of bromeholm sche seyde  
 In manus tuas lord to þe I calle  
 A-wake symond þe fend is on vs falle 4288  
 Myn herte is brokyn allas I ne am but ded  
 There lyth on vp on myn wombe & on myn hed  
 Help symkyn for þe false klerkys fyȝte  
 This Iohn styrte vp as faste as euere he myȝte 4292  
 And graspath by the walle to & fra  
 To fynde a staf & sche styrte vp als wa  
 And knew þe estis betere þan dede þis Iohn  
 And bi þe wal a staf sche fond a-non 4296  
 And saw a lytyl schemeryng of a lyȝt  
 ffor at an hole in schon þe mone bryt<sup>1</sup> [<sup>1</sup> corrected]  
 And by þat lyȝt sche say hem boþe too  
 But sekyrly sche nyste ho was who 4300  
 But as sche say a whit thyng in here eye  
 And whan sche gan þe whyte þyng espye  
 Sche wende þe clerk hadde wered a wolyper  
 And with the staf sche drow ay ner & ner 4304  
 And wende an hit þes aleyn at þe fulle  
 And smot þe mellere on þe pylede sculle  
 And doun he goth harow I deye  
 These clerkys bete hym wel & lete hym lye 4308  
 And hastede hem & toke here leue a-non  
 And ek here mele & on here woye þey gon  
 And at þe melle ȝit þey toke here kake  
 Of half a buschel flour wol wel I-bake 4312

Thus is þe proude mellerer wel I-bete	
And hath I-lost the gryndyng of þe wete	
And payed for þe souper euery del	[leaf 192]
Of aleyr & of Iohn þat bete hym wel	4316
Hese wyf is swyuyd & hese doughtyr als	
Lo swich It is a mellerer <sup>1</sup> to ben fals	[1 re: later]
And þerfore this prouerbe is seyð ful soth <sup>2</sup>	[2 soth: later]
Hym thar not wene wel þat cuele doth	4320
A gylour schal <sup>3</sup> hym self begylede be	[3 1: later]
And god þat settyth hye in <sup>4</sup> mageste	[4 in: later]
Save all þese cumpanyis grate <sup>5</sup> & smale	[5 ?corrected to grete]
Thus haue I quit þe mellerer in myn tale	4324

[Break of 3 lines in the MS.]

**T**He cook of lundene whil þe reue spak  
 ffor ioye hym thouzte he clawede hym on þ<sup>e</sup> bak  
 Ha ha ha for cristys passyoun  
 This mellere hadde a scharp conclusyoun 4328  
 Vp on his argument of herbergage  
 Wel seyde salamon / on his langage  
 Ne brynge not euery with in to þyn hous  
 ffor herberwyng be nyzte is perlyous 4332  
 Wel auzte a man avysede for to be  
 Whom þat he brouzte in to hese priuete  
 I preye to god so zeue me sorwe & care  
 Syn euere I highte hoge of ware 4336  
 Herde I euere a mellere betere I-set a werke  
 He hadde a Iape of maleys in þe derke  
 But god for-bede þat we stentyn here  
 And þefore ȝif ȝe wouche saf to here 4340  
 A tale of me þat am a pore man  
 I wele ȝow telle as wel as euere I can  
 A lytyl Iape what fel in oure cete  
 Oure ost answerde & seyde I graunte it þe 4344  
 Now telle on roger & loke þat it be good  
 ffor manye a paste hast þou letyn blod  
 And manye a rakke of douere hast þou sold/  
 That hath ben twyes hot & twyes cold [leaf 192, back] 4348  
 Of manye a pilgrym hast þou cristis curs  
 ffor of thyn persele ȝit thy fare þe wers  
 That þey han etyn with thyn stobil goos  
 ffor in thyn schoppe is manye a flye los 4352  
 Now telle on gentyl roger be þyn name  
 But ȝit I preye þe be not wroth for game  
 A man may sey ful soth in game & play  
 Thow seyst ful soth *quod* roger be myn fay 4356

But sooth pley quaad pley as þ<sup>e</sup> flemyng seyth  
 And þerfore herry bayly be þyn feyth  
 Be þou not wroth er we partyn here  
 Thow þat myn tale be of an ostelere 4360  
 But natheles I wele nat telle it 3et  
 But er we parte I-wis þou schat be quit  
 And þerwithal he low & made chere  
 And seyde hese tale as 3e schal aftyr here 4364

[*No break in the MS.*]



## Here begynnyst the kok of lundene hi tale

[*painting of the Cook*]

[*Nearly all leaf 193 of Camb. MS is cut out. Only He l. 4372, As 4373, We 4374, At 4375, H 4376, ff 4377, and bits of O and T, 4378-9, are left, and se of plase, l. 4410, and aunce 4412.*]

**A** Prentis whilom dwellid in oure citee [Sloane MS 1685,  
leaf 50, back]  
 And of a craft of vitalers was he  
 Gaillard he was as gol-fynche in þe schawe  
 Broun as bery. a proper short felawe 4368  
 With lokkes blake I-kempt ful fetisly  
 Daunce he kouþe so wel and Iolyly  
 That he clepid perkyn reueilloure  
 He was as ful of loue and paramour 4372  
 As is þe hive ful of hony swete  
 Wel was þe wenche with him myght mete  
 At euery bridale wold he synge and hoppe  
 He louede bette þe tauerne þan þe shoppe 4376  
 ffor whan þer any ridynge was in chepe [leaf 51]  
 Out of þe Shoppe þeder wold he lepe  
 Til þat he had al þe sight I-seyn  
 And daunced wel wold he not come a-gayne 4380  
 And gedrid hym mony of his sort  
 To hoppe and synge and make suche disport  
 And þere þey setten steuene for to mete  
 To pleyn at þe dys in suche a strete 4384  
 ffor in þe toun nas ner no prentis  
 That fairer couþe cast a peyre of dys  
 Then perkyn couth and þerto he was free  
 Of his dispence in place of pryuyte 4388  
 That fonde his maister wel in his chaffare  
 ffor ofte tyme he fonde his box ful bare  
 ffor sikirly a prentis reuelour  
 [. . . . . no gap in the MS.] 4392  
 His maystir shuld it in his shep abyte  
 Al haue not part of þe mynstralcie  
 ffor theft and riot þei ben conuertible  
 Al can he pleye on geterne or rubible 4396

Reuel and trouth as in lowe degree [Sloane MS 1685]  
 They ben ful wroth al day as men may see  
 This Iolye prentis with his mayster boode  
 Til he were nyghe oute of his prentis-hoode 4400  
 Al were he snybbit erly and late  
 And somtyme lad with Reuel to Newgate  
 But at last his maystir him by-poght  
 Vpon a day whan he his paper sought 4404  
 Of a prouerbe þat saith þis same word  
 Wel bet is roten appel oute of hoorde  
 Than þat it rotet alle þe remenant  
 So farith it by a ryocous seruant 4408  
 It is ful lasse harme to late hym passe  
 Than he shend alle þe seruauntz in þe place  
 Therfore his maystir ȝaf him a quytaunce  
 And bade him go with sorow *and* myschaunce 4412  
 And þus this Ioly prentis had his leuee [leaf 51, back]  
 Now let hym Riot al þe nyght or leue  
 And for ther is no theof with-oute a loke  
 That helpith hym to wasten *and* to sowke 4416  
 Of þat he bribe can or borow may  
 Anoon he sent his bede *and* his array  
 Vn to a couper of his owne soort  
 That loued dys Reuel *and* disport 4420  
 And had a wif þat held for contynauce  
 A shope and swyfed for hir sustynauce [Sloane extract ends.]

## APPENDIX TO GROUP A.

### [THE SPURIOUS TALE OF GAMELYN.]

[*Spurious Link.*]

But here of I wil passe as now [leaf 51, back, line 11.]  
And of ȝong Gamelyne I wil telle ȝou 2

[*Tale.*]

**T**he tale of ȝong Gamelyn 1  
Erthen *and* listeneth *and* herkenyth a right  
And shul here of a doughty knyght  
Sir Iohan de Boundys was his name  
He coude of norture and of mochel game 4  
Thre sones þe knyght had *and* with his body hem wan  
The eldest was a moche schrewe *and* sone he be-gan  
His brethren loued wel her fader *and* of hym were a-gast  
The eldist disserued his fader curs *and* had it at þe last 8  
The gode knyght his fader lyued so ȝore  
That deth was comen hym to. *and* handelid him ful sore  
The gode knyght cared sore. sike þere he lay  
How his children shuld lyuen after his day 12  
He had ben wide where but non husbond he was  
Al þe londe þat he had hit was purchas  
ffayn he wold hit were dressed a-mong hem alle  
That eche of hem hadde his part as it myght falle 16  
Tho sente he in to cuntre after wise knyghtes  
To helpen delen his londes *and* dressen hem to rightes  
He sent hem. word by *lettres* þai shuld hye blyue  
ȝif þei wold speke with him while he was on lyue 20

Tho þe knyghtes . herden . sike þat he lay  
 Had þey no rest nothir nyght ne day  
 Til þey come to him þere he lay stille  
 On his deth bed to a-bide goddes wille . 24  
 Then seyde þe goode knyght sike þere he lay [leaf 52]  
 Lordes I ȝou warne for soþe with-oute nay  
 I may no lenger lyuen here in þis stonde  
 ffor thorough goddes wille deth drawes to gronde 28  
 Ther nas non of hem alle þat herde hem a right  
 That þey hadden reuthe of þat ilke knyght  
 And seiden sir for goddes loue ne dismay ȝou nouȝt  
 God may done bote of bale þat is now I-wrouȝt 32  
 Than spake þe gode knyght sike þere he lay  
 Bote of bale god may sende I wote it is not nay  
 But I beseche ȝou knyghtes for þe loue of me  
 Goth and dresseth my londes a-mong my sones thre 36  
 And for þe loue of god delith not hem amys  
 And for-ȝetep not Gamelyn my ȝong sone þat is  
 Taketh hede to þat one as wel as to þat oþer  
 Selde ȝe seen any heire helpen his brother 40  
 Tho leten þey þe knyght lyen þat was not in hele  
 And wenten in to counseil his londis for to dele  
 ffor to delen hem alle to oon þat was her þoght  
 And for Gamelyn wast ȝongest he shuld haue nouȝt 44  
 Alle þe lond þat þer was þei dalten it in two  
 And leten Gamelyn þe ȝong with-uten lond go  
 And eche of hem saide to other ful lowde  
 His brethren myght ȝeue hym lond when he good cowde 48  
 When þey had deled at her wille  
 They comen to þe knyght þer he ley stille  
 And tolde hym a-non how þei had wrought  
 And þe knyght ther he lay likid it right noughȝt 52  
 Than seyde þe knyght by seynt martyñ  
 ffor al þat ȝe haue don ȝet is þe lond myñ  
 ffor go goddes loue Neigboures stondith al stille  
 And I wil delen my lond right after my wille 56

Iohn my eldest sone shal haue plowes fyue  
 That was my fadres heritage while he was on lyue  
 And my mydlest sone fyue plowes of lond  
 That I halp for to gete with my right hond 60  
 And al myn oper purchas of londes *and* ledes [leaf 52, back]  
 That I be-queepe Gamelyn *and* alle my gode stedes  
 And I beseke you good men þat law con of lond  
 ffor Gamelyns loue þat my quest stond 64  
 Thus dalt þe knyght his lond by his day  
 Right on his deth bed sike þere he lay  
 And sone aftirward he lay stoon stille  
 And died whan tyme come as it was cristes wille 68  
 A-none as he was deed *and* vnder gras graue  
 Sone þe elder broþer gyled þe zong knaue  
 He toke in to his honde and his lede  
 And Gamelyn him selfe to clothen *and* to fede 72  
 He cloped hym *and* fedde hym yuel *and* eke wrothe  
 And lete him his londes for-fare *and* his houses boþe  
 His parkes *and* his wodes *and* dide nopyng' welle  
 And sithen he it a-bowȝt on his owne felle 76  
 So longe was Gamelyn in his brothers halle  
 ffor þe strengest of good wille þei doutenden alle  
 Ther was none þere in. noþer zong' ne old  
 That wold wrath Gamelyn where he neuer so bold 80  
 Gamelyn stode on a day in his brothers ȝerde  
 And by-gan with his hand to hondel his berde  
 He þouȝt on his landes þat lay on-sawe  
 And his faire okes þat doune were I-drawe 84  
 His parkes were broken and his dere reved  
 Of alle his good stedes noon was him by-leued  
 His houses were vn-hiled and ful euel dight  
 Tho þouȝt Gamelyn it went not a right 88  
 Aftirward came his brother walkyng' þere  
 And seide to Gamelyn is oure mete ȝere  
 Tho wrathed him Gamelyn *and* swore by goodes booke  
 Thou shalt go bake þy self I wilnot be þi cooke 92



Now broþer Gamelyn hou vnswarest þou now  
 Thou spakkest neuer suche a word as þou dost now  
 By my feythe seide Gamelyn now me þynkith nede  
 Of alle þe armes þat I haue I toke neuer zet hede 96  
 My parkes ben broken and my dere by-reved [leaf 53]  
 Of myn armes *and* my stedes noghit is me byleued  
 Al þat my fader me quap al goth to schame  
 And þerfore haue goddes curs broþer by þyn name 100  
 Than spak his brother þat rape was of rees  
 Stand stille gadlyng and hold þy pees  
 Thou shalt fayne to haue þy mete *and* þy wede  
 What spekest þou gadlyng of lond or of lede 104  
 Than seide Gamelyn þe child þat was 3yng  
 Cristes curs mote he haue þat clepith me gadlyng  
 I am no worse gadlyng ne no worse wight  
 But borne of a lady and geten of a knyght 108  
 Ne dirst he note to Gamelyn neuer a fote go  
 But clepid to him his men *and* saide to hem þo  
 Goth *and* bethet þis boy *and* reueth him his witte  
 And lette hym lerne an oþer tyme to vnsware me bette 112  
 Then seide þe child 3ong Gamelyn  
 Cristes curs mote þou haue brother art þou myn  
 And 3if y shal algate be beten a-noon  
 Cristes curs mote þou haue but þou be þat oon 116  
 An-noon his brother in þat grete hete  
 Made his men to fette staffes Gamelyn to bete  
 When euery of hem hed a staffe nomen  
 Gamelyn was ware tho he seigh hem comen 120  
 Tho Gamelyn seigh hem comen he lokid ouer all  
 And was war of a pestel stood vnder þe wall  
 Gamelyn was light and pider he can lepe  
 And droff alle his brothers men right sone on hepe 124  
 And lokid as a wild lyon *and* layde on gode wone  
 Tho his brother sei þat he by-gan to gone  
 He fley vp in to a loft *and* shete þe dore fast  
 Thus Gamelyn with his pestel made hem alle a-gast 128

Some for Gamelyns loue *and* some for eye  
 Alle þey drowen hem to halues þoo he gan to flee  
 What now seide Gamelyn euel mote 3e þe  
 Wille 3e by-gynne contyk' *and* so sone flee 132  
 Gamelyn sou3t his brother whider he was flow [leaf 53, back]  
 And saughe where he lokid oute of a wyndow  
 Brother seyde Gamelyn come a litul nere  
 And I wille teche the a play at the bokeler 136  
 His brother him vnswarid and seide by seynt Richere  
 While þat pestel is in thi hond I wole come no nere  
 Brother I wil make thi pees I swere by cr[i]stes ore  
 Cast a-way þe pestel and wrath the no more 140  
 I moste nede saide Gamelyn wrath me at ones  
 ffor þou wold make þy men to breke my bones  
 Ne hadde I hadde mayn and myght in myn armes  
 To haue hem fro me thei wold haue do de harmes 144  
 Gamelyn saide his brother be þou not wroth  
 ffor to seen the haue harme me were right loth  
 I ne dede it nou3t brother but for a fondyng'  
 ffor to loken or þou art strong' and art so 3yng' 148  
 Come a doune þen to me *and* graunt me my bone  
 Of o þyng' I wil þe axe *and* we shul saught sone  
 Downe þan come his brother þat fekil was *and* felle  
 And was swich sore a-ferd of the pestell 152  
 He seide brother Gamelyn axe me þy bone  
 And loke þou blame but I it graunt sone  
 Than seide Gamelyn brother I was  
 And we shuff be at one þou most graunt me þis 156  
 Alle þat my fader me by-quap while þat he was on lyue  
 Thou moust do me it haue 3if we shul not stryve  
 That shalt þou haue Gamelyn I swere by cristes ore  
 Alle þat fader þe be-quap þough þou woldest haue more 160  
 Thi lond þat lith leye. wel it shal be sowe  
 And þyn houses reised vp þat ben leide ful lowe  
 Thus seide þe knyght to Gamelyn with mouth  
 And þou3t on falsenes as he wel couth 164

The knyght þought on treson an Gamelyn on none  
 And went and kissed his brother *and* whenne þey weren atone  
 Allas 3ong' Gamelyn no þyng' he ne wiste  
 With suche fals treson his brother hym kyste 168  
 Lyithenyth *and* lystnyth and holdith 3oure tong' (leaf 54)  
 And 3e shul here talkyng' of Gamelyn þe 3ong'  
 Ther was ther be siden. cried a wrastlyng'  
 And ther for ther was sette a Ram *and* a ryng' 172  
 And Gamelyn was in wille to wende þer to  
 ffor to preuen his myght what he coude do  
 Brother seid Gamelyn be seynt Richere  
 Thou most lene me to nyght a litel coursere 176  
 That is fressh to þe spores on for to ryde  
 I most on an Erand a litel here by side  
 Be god seide his broþer of stedes in my stalle  
 Go and chese the best spare non of hem alle 180  
 Of stedes *and* of coursers that stoden hem be side  
 And telle me gode brother whedir þou wilt ride  
 Here by side brother ys cried a wrastlyng'  
 And þerfore shal be set a Ram an a ryng' 184  
 Moche worship it were brother to vs alle  
 Might 3e the ram *and* þe ryng' bryngen home to þis halle  
 A stede þer was sadeled smertly *and* skete  
 Gamelyn dide a paire of spores fast on his fete 188  
 He sette his foot in þe stirop þe stede he by-strood  
 And toward þe wrastlyng' þe yong child rood  
 Tho Gamelyn þe yong was riden oute at gate  
 The fals knyght his brother lokid yit after þate 192  
 And by-souȝt ihesu crist þat is heuen kyng'  
 He myght breke his nekke in þat wrastlyng'  
 As sone as Gamelyn come þere the place was  
 He light doun of his stede on the gras 196  
 And ther he herde a frankeleyn weylaway synge  
 And bi-gan bitterly his hondes for to wrynge  
 Gode man saide Gamelyn whi makest þou þis fare  
 Is ther no man þat may 3ou helpen oute of care 200

Allas seide þis f[r]ankelyn þat euer y was bore  
 ffor twey stalworth sones I wene þat I haue lore  
 A Champyon is in þe place þat haþ wrouzt me sorowe 203  
 ffor he hath slayn my two sones but 3if god hem borowe  
 I wel 3eue ten pound by ihesu crist *and* more [leaf 54, back]  
 With þe nones that I fonde a man to handle hym sore  
 Gode man seide Gamelyn wilt þou wel done  
 Hold my hors while my man drawith of my shone 208  
 And helpe my man to kepe my clothes *and* my stede  
 And I wil in to place gone to loke if y may spede  
 By god seyde the frankeleyn it shal be done  
 I wille my self be þy mane<sup>1</sup> to draw of þy shone [<sup>1</sup> MS name]  
 And wende þou in to place ihesu crist the spede  
 And drede not of thi clothes ne of thi gode stede  
 Barfoot and vngirt Gamelyn In came  
 Alle þat were in þe place hede of him þei name 216  
 How he dorste auntre him to done his myght  
 That was so doughty a champion in wrastlyng<sup>1</sup> *and* in fight  
 Vp sterte þe Champion rapely a-none  
 Toward 3ong<sup>1</sup> Gamelyn he by-gan to gone 220  
 And seide who is þy fader *and* who is þy sire  
 ffor soþe þou art a grete foole þat þou come here  
 Gamelyn vnswarid þe Champion tho  
 Thou knew wel my fader while he couthe go 224  
 Whilis he was on lyue by seynt Martyn  
 Sire Iohan of Boundis was his name *and* I Gamelyn  
 ffelaw seide the Champion so mote I thryue  
 I knewe wel the fader whiles he was on lyue 228  
 And thi self Gamelyn I wil þat þou it here  
 While þou were a 3ong<sup>1</sup> boy a moche schrew þou were  
 Than saide Gamelyn *and* swore by cristes ore  
 Now I am older wax þou shal fynde me a more 232  
 By god seyde þe Champion wel come mote þou be  
 Come þou ones in myn honde þou shalt neuer the  
 It was wel with-inne nyght *and* þe mone shone  
 When Gamelyn *and* the Champion to gedre gon gone 236



The Champion east tornes to Gamelyn þat was prest  
 And Gamelyn stode and bade hym done his best  
 Than seide Gamelyn to þe Champion  
 Thou art fast a-boute to bryng' me a-don. 240  
 Now I haue proued mony tornes of thyne [leaf 55]  
 Thow most he seide proue on or two of myne  
 Gamelyn to the Champion ȝede smertly a-none  
 Of alle tornes þat he couthe he shewed hym but one 244  
 And kest hym on the lift side þat þre ribbes to-brake  
 And þerto his on arme þat ȝaf a grete crak'  
 Than sayde Gamelyn smertly a none  
 Shal it be hold for a cast or ellis for none 248  
 By god seide þe Champion where it be  
 He þat comeþ ones in þy honde shal he neuer the  
 Than seide þe frankelyn þat had his sones þere  
 Blessed be þou Gamelyn þat euer þou bore were 252  
 The frankeleyn seide to the Champion on hym stood hym no  
 This is ȝon Gamelyn þat taught the þis pleie [eye  
 Aȝen vnsward þe Champion þat liked no þyns wel  
 He is alther meister *and* his pleie is right felle 256  
 Sithen I wrastelet first it is gon ȝore  
 But I was in my lif handled neuer so sore  
 Gamelyn stode in the place a-non with-oute serke  
 And seide ȝif þer be mo let hem come to werke 260  
 The Champion þat payned hym to werke sore  
 Hit semeth by his contenance þat he wille nomore  
 Gamelyn in the place stooode stille as stoon  
 ffor to a-bide wrastlyng' but þer come non 264  
 Ther was none with Gamelyn þat wold wrastle more  
 ffor he handlid þe Champyon so wonderly sore  
 To gentil men ȝemed þe place  
 Come to gamelyn god ȝyue hym gode grace 268  
 And seide to hym to on thi hosen *and* þi shone  
 ffor soþe at þis tyme þis faire is done  
 And þan saide Gamelyn so mote I wel fare  
 I haue not ȝet haluendel sold my ware 272



Tho seide þe Champion so brok' I my swere  
 He is a fool þat þer-of bief þou sillest it so dere  
 Thoo seide the frankeleyn þat was in moche care  
 ffelaw he seide why lakkist þou þis ware 276  
 By seynt Iame in Gales þat mony man hath sought [155, bk]  
 3it is it to good chepe þat þou hast bought  
 Tho þat wardeyns were of þat wrastlyng'  
 Come and brouzt Gamelyn þe Ram and þe ryng' 280  
 [ . . . . .  
 . . . . . no gap in the MS.]  
 And Gamelyn thouzt it was a faire þyng'  
 And went with moche Ioy home in þe mornyng' 284  
 His broþer seie where he came with þe grete route  
 And bade shit þe gate and hold hym with-oute  
 The porter of his lord was sore a-gaste  
 And stert a-none to the gate and lokked it faste 288  
 Now lytþeþ and lysteneyth boþe yong' and old  
 And 3e shul he Gamyn of Gamelyn þe bold  
 Gamelyn come þerto for to haue comyn In  
 Than was it schet fast with a pyn 292  
 Than seide Gamelyn porter vndo þe 3ate  
 ffor gode mannys sone stond þer ate  
 Than answered þe porter and sware by goddes berd  
 Thou ne shalt Gamelyn come in to this 3erd 296  
 Thou lixt seide Gamelyn so broke I my chyne  
 He smote the wiket with his foote and brake a-way þe pyne  
 The porter sey tho it myght no better be  
 He sette fote on erthe and by-gan to flee 300  
 By my fey seide Gamelyn þat trauel is lore  
 ffor I am on fote as light as þou haddest it swore  
 Gamelyn ouer toke þe porter and his tene wrake  
 And girt him in the nekke þat þe boon to-brake 304  
 And toke him in his arme and threw hym in a welle  
 Vij<sup>c</sup>. fadame it was depe I haue herd telle  
 Whan Gamelyn þe 3ong' þus had plaide his plaie  
 Alle þat in the 3erde were drowen hem a-waye 308

They dredein hym fol sore for werke þat he wrought  
 And for þe faire companye þat he þedir brought  
 Gamelyn ȝede to þe ȝate *and* lete hit vp wide  
 He lete in alle þat gone old or ride 312  
 And seide ȝe be welcōme with-outē eny greue  
 ffor we wille be maisters here *and* axe no man leue  
 ȝersterday I left. seyde ȝong<sup>r</sup> Gamelyn [leaf 56]  
 In my broþer seller fyue tonne wyne 316  
 I wilnot þis companye parten on twyne  
 And ȝe wille don after me while soþe ys þer-inne  
 And ȝif my brother gruche or make foule chere  
 Other for spence of mete or drynke þat we spende here 320  
 I am oure Catour *and* here oure alþer purse  
 He shal haue for his gruchyng<sup>r</sup> seynt marie curse  
 My brother ys a nygon y swere by cristes ore  
 And we wille spende largely þat he hath spared ȝore 324  
 And who þat make gruchyng<sup>r</sup> þat we here dwelle  
 He shal to porter in to þe drawe welle  
 Vij. dayes and vij. nyght: Gamelyn held his fest  
 With moche solace was there *and* none chest 328  
 In a litel torret his broþer ley steke  
 And sey hem wast his good *and* dorst not speke  
 Erly in a mornynge on the viij. day  
 The gestes come to Gamelyn *and* wold gone her way 332  
 Lordes seide Gamelyn wil ȝe so hye  
 Alle þe wyne is not ȝet dronke so broke I myn eye  
 Gamelyn in his hert was ful wo  
 Whenne his gestes toke her leue fro hym for to go 336  
 He wold þey hadde dwelled lenger *and* þey seide nay  
 But by-tauȝt Gamelyn god *and* goode day  
 Thus made Gamelyn his fest and brouȝt it wel to ende  
 And after his gestes to leue to wende 340  
 Lythē *and* lystenyth *and* holdeth ȝoure tonge  
 And ȝe shul here Gamen of Gamelyn þe ȝong<sup>r</sup>  
 Herkenyth lordynges and lystenyth a right  
 Whenne alle gestes were gon how Gamelyn was dight 344

Alle þe while þat Gamelyn held his mangerie  
 His broþer þoght on hym be wreke with his trecherie  
 Tho Gamelyns gestis were riden *and* gone  
 Gamelyn stode a-none allone frende hed he none 348  
 Tho after felle sone with-In a litul stonde  
 Gamelyn was taken *and* ful hard I-bonde .  
 fforþ come þe fals knyght oute of þe solere [leaf 56, back]  
 To Gamelyn his broþer he ȝede ful nere 352  
 And saide to Gamelyn ho made þe so bolde  
 ffor to stroien my store of my householde  
 Brother seyde Gamelyn wrath the right noght  
 ffor it is mony day gone sith it was boght 356  
 ffor broþer þou last hadde by seynt Richere  
 Of xv. plowes of lond þis sixtene ȝere  
 And of alle the bestis þou hast forþ bredde  
 That my fader me by-quap on his deþ bedde 360  
 Of alle þis sixtene I ȝeue þe þe þe þe  
 ffor þe mete and the drynke þat we haue spended now  
 Than sayde þe false knyght euyl mote he the  
 Herken broþer Gamelyn what I wil geve þe 364  
 ffor of my body brother here geten haue I none  
 I wil make the myn eyer I swere by seynt Iohan  
 Parfay saide Gamelyn and it so be  
 And þou þinkest as þou seist gold ȝeld it the 368  
 No thyng wist Gamelyn of his broþer gyle  
 Therfore he hym by-gyled in a litul while  
 Gamelyn seide he oo þyng I þe telle  
 Tho thou threw my porter in þe drawe wel 372  
 I swor in þat wrath and in that grete moote  
 That þou shuldist be bond both hond *and* foote  
 [ . . . . .  
 . . . . . 376  
 . . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]  
 ffor to holden my a-vou as I the be-hote  
 Brother seide Gamelyn as mote ȝe the  
 þou shalt be for-swore for the loue of me 380

Tho maden þei Gamelyn to sitte myght he not stonde  
 Til þey hadde him both foot *and* honde  
 The fals knyght his broþer of Gamelyn was a-gast  
 And sende after fetters to fetteren him fast 384  
 His broþer made lesynges on hym þer he stode  
 And tolde hem þat comen In þat Gamelyn was wode  
 Gamelyn stode to a post bonden in the halle  
 Tho that comen In . looked on hym alle 388  
 Euere stode Gamelyn euen vp right [leaf 57]  
 But mete *and* drynke had he none noþer day ne nyght  
 Than saide Gamelyn brothir by myn hals  
 Now I haue aspied þou art a party fals 392  
 Had I wist þe treson þat þou hast fond  
 I wold haue ȝeue strokes or I had be bond  
 Gamelyn stode stille bonde as eny stone  
 Two dayes *and* two nyghtes mete hadde he none 396  
 Than seide Gamelyn þat stode I-bonde strong  
 Adam spenser me þynkiþ I fast to long  
 Adam spenser now I beseche the  
 ffor þe moche loue my fader loued the 400  
 Ȝif þou may come to the keyes lese me out of bond  
 And I wil parte with the of my fre lond  
 Than seide Adam þat was þe spencer  
 I haue serued þy brother þis xvj. ȝere 404  
 Ȝif I let the gon out of his beure  
 He wold saie afterward I were a traitour  
 Adam seide Gamelyn so brok I myn hals  
 Thou shalt fynd my broþer at þe last fals 408  
 Therefore broþer Adam lose me oute of bondes  
 And I wil parte with the of my fre londes  
 Vp suche forward seide Adam I-wis  
 I wil do þerto al þat in me is 412  
 Adam seide Gamelyn as mote I the  
 I wille hold þe couenaunt *and* þou wil me  
 Anone as Adams lord to bedde was gone  
 Adam toke þe keyes *and* lete Gamelyn oute a-none 416



He vnloked Gamelyn boþe hondes *and* feete  
 In hope of auauncement þat he him be-hete  
 Than seide Gamelyn þankid be goddes sonde  
 Now I am lose boþe foote *and* hande 420  
 Hadde I now eten *and* dronken a right  
 Ther is none in this hous shuld bynde ne þis nyght  
 Adam toke Gamelyn as stille as eny stoon  
 And lad hym in to spense raply a-none. 424  
 And sette hym to soþer right in a priue stede [leaf 57, back]  
 He badde him do gladly adam so dide  
 Anon as Gamelyn had eten wel *and* fyne  
 And þerto I-dronken wel of þe rede wyne 428  
 Adam seyde Gamelyn what is now þi rede  
 Or I go to my brother *and* gird of his hede  
 Gamelyn seid Adam it shal not be so  
 I con teche the a rede þat is worth þe two 432  
 I wote wel for soþe þat þis is no nay  
 We shul haue a mangery right on sonday  
 Abbotes *and* prioures mony here shal be  
 And oþer men of holy chirche as I telle the 436  
 Thou shalt stond vp by þe post as þou wer hond fast  
 And I shal leue hem vnloke þat a-way þou may hem cast  
 Whan þat þei haue eten *and* wasshen her hondis  
 Thou shalt biseke hem alle to bryng the oute of bondys  
 [ . . . . . 441  
 . . . . . *no gap in the MS.* ]  
 And if eche of hem say to vs nay  
 I shal do an oþer I swere by þis day 444  
 Thou shalt haue a gode staffe I wil haue another  
 And cristes curs haue þat oon þat falith þat oþir  
 3e for god seide Gamelyn I sey it for me  
 3if I faile on my side euel mote I the 448  
 3if we shul algate assoile hem of her synne  
 Warne me brother Adam whan we shul be-gynne  
 Gamelyn saide Adam by seynt charite  
 I wil warne the by-forne whan it shal be 452



Whan I wynke on the loke for to goon  
 And caste a-way thy feders *and* come to me anoon  
 Adam seyð Gamelyn blessed be þy bones  
 That is a gode conseil ȝeuen for þe nones 456  
 Ȝif þey werne me to bryng' þe oute of bondes  
 I wil sette gode strokes right on her lendes  
 Tho þe sonday was comen *and* folke to þe feste  
 flaire þei were welcomed boþe lest *and* meste 460  
 And euere as þey at þe halle dore comē Inne  
 They cast here eye on ȝong' Gamelyn.  
 The fals knyght his brothir ful of trecherye [leaf 58]  
 Alle þe gestes þat þer were at þe mangerye 464  
 Of Gamelyn his brothir he told hem with mouthes  
 Alle þe harme and þe shame þat he telle couthe  
 Tho þei were I-serued of messes two or thre  
 Than seide Gamelyn how serue ȝe me 468  
 It is noght wel serued by god þat all made  
 That I sitte fastyng' and oþer men make glade  
 The fals knyght his brother þer as he stooðe  
 Told alle gestes that Gamelyn was woode 472  
 And Gamelyn stooðe stille and vnswared noght  
 But Adams wordes he held in his þought  
 Tho Gamelyn gan speke deolfully with alle  
 To þe grete lordes þat saten in þe halle 476  
 Lordes he saide for cristes passion  
 Helpe to bryng' Gamelyn oute of prison  
 Than saide an Abbot sorow on his cheke  
 He shal haue cristes curs *and* seynt maryes eke 480  
 That þe oute of prison beggeþ or borowe  
 But euer worth hym wel þat doþe þe moche sorowe  
 After þat abbot þan spake an oþer  
 I wold þyn heed were of þeiȝh þou were my brother 484  
 Alle þat þe borow foul mote hem falle  
 Thus þei saide alle þat were in the halle  
 Than saide a priour euel mote he preue  
 It is grete sorow *and* care boy þou art on lyue 488

Ow seide Gamelyn so broke I my bone  
 Now I haue spied þat frendes haue I none  
 Cursed mote he worth both flessþ *and* blood  
 That euer doth abbot or priour eny good 492  
 Adam þe spense toke vp toke vp þe cloþe  
 And loked on Gamelyn *and* say þat he was wroth  
 Adam on þe pantrie litul he þought  
 [ . . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] 496  
 Adam lokith on Gamelyn *and* he was war anone  
 And cast a-way þe fetters *and* by-gan to gone  
 Tho he come to Adam he toke þe on stafe  
 And by-gan to worche *and* good strokes 3afe 500  
 Gamelyn come in to the halle *and* þe spencer boþe [158, bk1]  
 And lokid hem a-boute as þei hadde be wrope  
 Gamelyn spreynþ holiwater with a Oken spire  
 That some þat stood vp right fel in the fire 504  
 Ther was no lewed man þat in þe halle stode  
 That wolde do Gamelyn ony þing but gode  
 But stoden bisiden and leten hem boþe wirche  
 ffor þei hadde no rewth of men of holy chirche 508  
 Abbot or priour monk or chanoun  
 That Gamelyn ouertoke anoon þei 3eden doun  
 Ther was noon of alle þat with his staff mette  
 That he made hem ouerthrow *and* quitte hem his dette 512  
 Gamelyn seide Adam for seint Charite  
 Paye gode lyueray for þe loue of me  
 And I wil kepe the dore so euere here I masse  
 Er þei ben assoyled ther shaft noon passe 516  
 Doute þee nought seide Gamelyn while we ben in fere  
 Kepe þou wel þe dore and I wole worche heere  
 Bistere þee gode Adam and let ther noon fle  
 And we shaft telle largely how many þat þer be 520  
 Gamelyn seide Adam do hem but gode  
 Thei ben men of hooly chirche drawe of hem no blode  
 Saue wel þe coroun and do hem no harmes  
 But breke bothe her leggis and sithen her armes 524

Thus Gamelyn and Adam wrought right fast  
 And playde with the monkes and made hem agast  
 Thider þei come ryding iolily with swaynes  
 And home aȝen þei weren lad in cartes and in waynes 528  
 Tho þei hadden alle don þanne seide a gray frere  
 Alas sir Abbot what dide we now heere  
 Tho þat we comen hider it was a cold rede  
 Vs hadde ben better at home with water and with brede  
 While Gamelyn made ordres of Monkes and frere 533  
 Euer stode his brother and made foule chere  
 Gamelyn vp with his staff þat he wel knewe  
 And girt hym in þe necke þat he ouerthrowe 536  
 A litel aboue the girdel þe rigge boon to-brast [leaf 59]  
 And sette hym in þe fetres þere he sat sat arst  
 Sitte þer brother seyde Gamelyn  
 fforto colen thi body as I dide myne 540  
 As swithe as þei hadden wroken hem of her foon  
 Thei asked water and wasshen anoon  
 What some for her loue and some for her awe  
 Alle þe seruauntes serued hem of þe best lawe 544  
 The Sherryf was þenne but fyue myle  
 And alle was told hym in a lytel while  
 How Gamelyn and Adam hadde don a sory res  
 Bounden and wounden men aȝens þe kinges pes 548  
 Tho bigan soone stryf forto wake  
 And þe Sherryf aboute Gamelyn for to take  
 Now lytheth and lystneth so god ȝeue ȝou good fyne  
 And ȝe shullen here good game of ȝong Gamelyne 552  
 ffoure and twenty ȝongemen þat helden hem ful bolde  
 Come to þe Sherryf and seide þat þei wolde  
 Gamelyn and Adam fette by her fay  
 The Sherryf ȝeue hem leue soth forto say 556  
 They hyeden fast wolde þei not lynne  
 Tyl þei come to þe gate ther Gamelyn was Inne  
 They knokkiden atte gate þe porter was nygh  
 And lokide out at an hole as man þat was sligh 560

The porter hadde biholde hem a litel while  
 He loued wel Gamelyn and was a-drad of gyle  
 And let þe wiket stonde ful stille  
 And asked hem withoute what was her wille 564  
 ffor al þe gret companye þan spak but oon  
 Vndo þe gate porter and let us yn goon  
 Thanne seide þe porter so broke I my chyn  
 3e shullen seye 3oure erand er 3e come In 568  
 Say to Gamelyn and adam if þer wille be  
 We wille speke with hem two wordes or thre  
 ffelowe seide þe porter stonde þere stille  
 And I wil wende to Gamelyn to wite his wille. 572  
 In went þe porter to Gamelyn anoon (leaf 59, back)  
 And seide sir I warne 3ou heere be comen 3oure foon  
 The Sherrefs men ben atte gate  
 fforto take 3ou bothe shul 3e not ascape 576  
 Porter seide Gamelyn so mote I wel thee  
 I wole allow þee þi wordis whanne y my tyme se  
 Go agayn to þe gate and dwelle with hem a while  
 And þou shalt se right soone porter/ a gyle 580  
 Adam seide Gamelyn loke þee to gone  
 We haue fomen atte þe gate and freendes neuere one  
 It ben þe Sherryfs men þat hider ben comen  
 They ben swore to-gidre þat we shullen be nomen 584  
 Gamelyn seide adam hye þee right blyue  
 And if I fayle þee þis day yuel mote I thryue  
 And we shullen so welcome þe Sherrifs men  
 That some of hem shullen make her beddes in þe fen 588  
 At a posterne gate Gamelyn out went  
 And a good Cartstaff in his hond hent  
 Adam hente soone anoþer gret staff  
 fforto helpen Gamelyn and good strokes 3af 592  
 Adam fel tweyne and Gamelyn fel three  
 The Other sette feet on erþe and bigan to flee  
 What seide adam so euere here I masse  
 I haue right good wyne drynk' er 3e passe 596



Nay bi god seide þei þi drynk' is not goode  
 It wolde make mannes brayn to lien in his hooðe  
 Gamelyn stode stille and lokide hym aboute  
 And seide þe Sherrif cometh with a gret route 600  
 Adam seide Gamelyn what ben now þi redes  
 Heere cometh the Sherryf and wil haue oure heedes  
 Adam seide to Gamelyn my rede is now þis  
 Abide we no lenger lest we fare Amys 604  
 I rede þat we to wode gone er þat we be founde  
 Better is þere louse þan in towne be bounde  
 Adam toke by þe hond ȝong' Gamelyn  
 And euery of hem drank a draught of wyn 608  
 And aftir token her cours and wenten her way [leaf 60]  
 Tho fonde the Sherryf nest' but noon Eye  
 The Sherryf light downe and wente into halle  
 And fonde þe lorde fetred fast withalle 612  
 The Sherryf' vnfetrede hym right soone Anone  
 And sente aftir/ a lege to hele his rygge bone  
 Lete we now þe fals knyght lie in his care  
 And talke we of Gamelyn and loke howe he fare 616  
 Gamelyn into the wode stalkid stille  
 And adam spencer/ liked right' ille  
 Adam swore to Gamelyn by seint' Richere  
 Now I se it' is mery to be a spencere 620  
 That leuer/ me were keyes to bere  
 Thanne walken in this wilde wode my clothes to tere  
 Adam seide Gamelyn dismay thee right' noght'  
 Many goode mannes child in care is brought 624  
 As þei stode talking' bothen in fere  
 Adam herde talking' of men and nygh hym thought þei were  
 Tho Gamelyn vndir/ wode lokide a right  
 Seuene score of ȝongemen he se wel I-dight 628  
 Alle Sate at' þe mete compas aboute  
 Adam seide Gamelyn now haue I no doute  
 After bale cometh bote thorogh goddis myght  
 Me þenke of mete and drynk' I haue a sight 632



Adam lokide tho vndir/ wode bough  
 And tho he Say mete and he was glad ynough  
 ffor he hoped to god to haue his dele  
 And he was sore alonged aftir a good mele 636  
 As he seide þat word þe mayster outlawe  
 Sawgh Adam and Gamelyn vndir wode shawe  
 3ongemen seide þe maister bi þe goode Rode  
 I am war/ of gestes god send vs goode 640  
 3onde ben two 3ongemen wel dight  
 And peraenture ther ben more who so lokid a right  
 Arisith up 3ongemen and fette hem to me  
 It is good that we witen what men they be 644  
 Vp ther sterten seuene fro the dynere [leaf 60, back]  
 And metten with Gamelyn and adam spencere  
 Whan þei weren nygh hem þanne seide that one  
 3eldeth 3ou 3ongemen 3oure bowes and 3oure flone 648  
 Thanne seide Gamelyn that 3onge was of eelde  
 Mich sorowe mote thei haue þat to 3ou hem 3elde  
 I course noon other/ but right my selue  
 Though 3e fette to 3ou fyue þan be 3e twelue 652  
 Tho þei herde bi his word that myght was in his arme  
 Ther was noon of hem þat wolde do hem harme  
 But seide to Gamelyn myldly and stille  
 Come afore our maister and seie to hym þi wille 656  
 3ongemen seide Gamelyn by 3oure lewte  
 What man is 3oure maister that 3e with be  
 Alle þei answeride withoute lesyng  
 Oure mayster is corouned of outelawis king 660  
 Adam seide Gamelyn go we in cristes name  
 He may neiþer mete ne drynk werne vs for shame  
 If þat he be hende and come of gentyl bloode  
 He wole 3eue us mete and drynk and do us some goode 664  
 By seint Iame seide adam what harme þat I gete  
 I wil auenture me that I hadde mete  
 Gamelyn and adam wente forth in fere  
 And þei grette þe mayster þat þei fonde pere 668

Thanne seide the mayster king<sup>t</sup> of outlawis  
 What<sup>t</sup> seke 3e 3ongemen vnder wode shawes  
 Gamelyn answeride þe king<sup>t</sup> with his coroun  
 He must nedis walke in feeld þat may not walke in toun 672  
 Sire we walke not heere noon harme to do  
 But if we mete a dere to shete therto  
 As men that ben hungry and mowe no mete fynde  
 And ben hard bistad vnder wode lynde 676  
 Of Gamelyn wordis the maister hadde ruthe  
 And seide 3e shal haue ynow haue god my treuthe  
 He bad hem sitte doun forto take reste  
 And bad hem ete and drynke and that of the beste/ 680  
 As þei eten and drunken wel and fyne [leaf 61]  
 Thanne seide oon to another/ þis is Gamelyne  
 Tho was the maister outlawe into Counsel nome  
 And tolde how it was Gamelyn that<sup>t</sup> was thider come 684  
 Anone as he herde how it<sup>t</sup> was bifalle  
 He made hym maister vnder hym ouer hem alle  
 Withynne the thridde woke hym come tydyng<sup>t</sup>  
 To the maister outlawe that was her king<sup>t</sup> 688  
 That he shulde come home his pees was maad  
 And of that good tyding<sup>t</sup> he was ful glade  
 Tho seide he to his 3ongemen soth forto telle  
 Me ben comen tydynges I may no lenger dwelle 692  
 Tho was gamelyn anone without<sup>t</sup> tariyng<sup>t</sup>  
 Made maister/ outlawe and corouned her king<sup>t</sup>  
 Tho was Gamelyn crowned king<sup>t</sup> of outlawes  
 And walkide a while vnder wode shawes 696  
 The fals knyght his brother/ was Shereue and sire  
 And lete his brother endite for hate and for hire  
 Tho were his bondemen sory and no þing<sup>t</sup> glad  
 Whanne Gamelyn her lord wolfes heed was cried & maad 700  
 And sent<sup>t</sup> oute of his men where þei myght hym fynde  
 ffor to seke Gamelyn vnder wode lynde  
 To telle hym tidyng the wynde was went  
 And aft his good reued and alle his men shent 704

Whanne þei hadden hym founden on knees þei hem setten  
 And a-doun with her hoode and her lord gretten  
 Sire wrathe 3ou nought for þe goode roode  
 ffor we haue brought 3ou tydyng but þei be nought gode 708  
 Now is þi brother Sherreue and hath the baillie  
 And hath endited thee and wolfes heed doth thee crie  
 Allas seide Gamelyn þat euere I was so slak'  
 That I ne hadde broke his necke tho I his rigge brak' 712  
 Goth gretith wel myn husbondes and wyf  
 I wil be atte þe next shire and god sende me lyf  
 Gamelyn cam redy to þe next shire  
 And there was his brother boþe lord and sire 716  
 Gamelyn booldlich come into the mote halle [leaf 61, back]  
 And putte a-doun his hoode among the lordis alle  
 God saue 3ou lordis that here bee  
 But brok' bak' Sherreue yuel mote thou thee 720  
 Why hast thou do me that Shame and vylonye  
 fforto late endite me and wolfes heed do me crie  
 Tho thought the fals knyght fforto ben a-wreke  
 And lete Gamelyn most he no thing' speke 724  
 Might ther' be no grace but' Gamelyn atte þe laste  
 Was cast' in prisoun and fetered faste  
 Gamelyn hath a brother that hight Sir Ote  
 As good a knyght' and hende as myght gone on fote 728  
 Anone 3ede a messenger to that' good knyght  
 And tolde hym al to-gidre how gamelyn was dight  
 Anone as Sir Ote herde how Gamelyn was dight  
 He was right Sori. was he no thing' light 732  
 And lete saddle a stede and the way he name  
 And to his tweye breþerne ryght' soone he came  
 Sir Seide Sir Ote to þe Sherreue tho  
 We ben but three briþerne shullen we neuere be mo 736  
 And thou hast prisoned the best of vs alle  
 Sich another brother/ yuel mote hym bifalle  
 Sir Ote seide the fals knyght lat be thi cours  
 Bi god for thy wordes he shal fare the wors 740

To the kinges prisoun he is nome  
 And there he shal abide tyl the Iustice come  
 Parde seide Sir/ Ote better it Shal be  
 I bydde hym to maynprise þat þou graunt me 744  
 Tyl the next sitting' of delyueraunce  
 And late thanne Gamelyn stonde to his chaunce  
 Brother' in sicke a forward I take hym to þee  
 And bi þi fadris soule þat þee bigat and me 748  
 But he be redy whanne the Iustice Sitte  
 Thou shalt bere þe Iugement for al thi gret witte  
 I graunt wel seide Sir Ote that it so be  
 Late delyuer hym anoon and take hym to me/ 752  
 Tho was gamelyn delyuered to Sir Ote his brother (leaf 62)  
 And that nyght dwellide the oon with the other  
 On the morowen seide Gamelyn to Sir Ote þe hende  
 Brother he seide I mote forth fro þou wende 756  
 To loke how my þongemen leden her lyf  
 Whether they lyuen in ioie or ellis in stryf  
 By god seide sir Ote þat is a cold rede  
 Now I see that alle þe cark shall falle on myn hede 760  
 ffor whanne þe Iustice sitte and þou be not founde  
 I shal anoon be take and in thi stede bounde  
 Brother seide Gamelyn dismay thee nought  
 ffor by seynt Iame in Gales þat many man hath sought 764  
 If þat god almyghty holde me my lyf' and my witte  
 I wille be redy whanne þe Iustice Sitte  
 Thanne seide Sir Ote to Gamelyn god shilde þee fro shame  
 Come whanne þou seest tyme and bringe vs out' of blame  
 Litheth and listneth and holde þou stille 769  
 And 3e shullen heere how Gamelyn hadde his wille  
 Gamelyn wente vndir' wode Rys  
 And fonde there playng' þongemen of prys 772  
 Tho was þong' Gamelyn right' glad ynough  
 Whanne he fonde his men vndir' wode bough  
 Gamelyn and his men talkiden in fere  
 And they hadde good game her mayster/ to heere 776



His men tolde hym of Auentures þat þei hadde founde  
 And Gamelyn hem told aȝen hou he was fast bounde  
 Whyle Gamelyn was outlawe hadde he no cors  
 Ther was no man that for hym farde the wors 780  
 But Abbotes and prioures Monkes and Chanoun  
 On hem left he nought whanne he might hem nome  
 Whyle Gamelyn and his men made mirthes Ryue  
 The fals knyght his brother yuel mote he pryue 784  
 ffor he was fast aboute bope day and other/  
 fforto hire the quest to hangen his brother/  
 Gamelyn stode on a day and biheelde  
 The wodes and the shawes and the wylde feelde 788  
 He thought on his brother how he hym byhette [leaf 62, back]  
 That he wolde be redy whanne the Iustice sette  
 He thought wel he wolde withoute delay  
 Come afore the Iustice to kepen his day 792  
 And sayde to his ȝonge men dighteth ȝow ȝare  
 ffor whanne the Iustice sitte we must be thare  
 ffor I am vndir borowe tyl that I come  
 And my brother for me to prison shal be nome 796  
 By seynt Iame seyde his ȝongemen *and* þou rede þerto  
 Ordeyne how it shal be and it shal be do  
 While Gamelyn was comyng þere þe Iustice Satt  
 The fals knyght his brother forȝate he not þat 800  
 To hire the men on his quest to hangen his brother  
 Though they hadde not the oon þei wolde haue þe oper  
 Tho come Gamelyn fro vndir þe wode Rys  
 And brought with hym ȝonge men of prys 804  
 I see wel seide Gamelyn the Iustice is sette  
 Go aforn Adam and loke how it spette  
 Adam went into þe halle and lokide al aboute  
 He say þere stonde lordes grete and stoute 808  
 And sir Ote hir brother fetered ful fast  
 Tho wente Adam oute of þe halle as he were agast  
 Adam seyde to Gamelyn and to his felowes alle  
 Sir Ote stondith fetered in the mote halle 812



[ . . . . .  
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]  
If god 3eue vs grace wel for to do  
He shal it abigge that it brought þerto 816  
Thanne seide Adam þat lokkes hadde hore  
Cristes curs mote he haue þat hym bonde so sore  
And þou wolt Gamelyn do aftir my rede  
Ther is none in the halle þat shal bere away his hede 820  
Adam seide Gamelyn we wille not do so  
We wil sle þe gyltif and late þe other go  
I wil into þe halle and with the Iustice speke  
On hem þat ben gyltif I wil ben a-wreke 824  
Lete none scape atte þe dore take zongemen 3eme  
ffor I wil be Iustice þis day domes to deme [Sloane 1685 wants  
2 leaves]  
God spede me þis daye And my newe werke [MS Reg. 17 D xv.  
leaf 78, back]  
Adam come with me ffor þou schalte be my Clarke  
His Men answerede hym And badde hym doone his best'  
And yefe þou to vs haue nede þou schalte ffynde vs prest'  
We wolt stonde with the whyle þat we maye dure  
Butte we werke Mannelye paye vs none hyere 832  
Yonge Men sayde Gamelyn so motte I well thee  
As trusty A Mayster 3e schulfe fynde of me  
Righte there As the Iustyce satte in the halle  
In wente Gamelyn Amonges hem all [leaf 79] 836  
Gamelyn lete vnfetter his brother owte of bonde  
Than sayde Sir Ote his broþere þat was hende  
Thou haddeste Almoste Gamelyn dwellede to longe  
The qweste is owte of Me þat I schulde honge 840  
Brother sayde Gamelyn As god yeue me gode reste  
This daye þey schullen be hangede þat bene on thy qweste  
And the Iustyce bothe that is the Iugge Man  
And þe Schryve boþe proughe hym hitt' biganne 844  
Than sayde Gamelyn to the Iustyce  
Now is thy power doone þou Muste nedes Aryse  
Thou haste youen domes þat bene euytfe dyghte  
I wolt sytten in þe Sete And dressen hem aryghte 848

The Iustyce sate stylle And rose notte anōne  
 And Gamelyn cleuede his Cheke bone  
 Gamelyn toke hym in his Armes *and* no more spake  
 Butte prewe hym ouer the barre *and* his Arme brake 852  
 Durste none to Gamelyn saye butte gode  
 ffor ffore of the Company þat withoute stode  
 Gamelyn sette hym downe in the Iustyce stede  
 [ . . . . . 856  
 . . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]  
 Harken of bourde that Gamelyn tho dyde  
 He lette flettere his brother *and* þe ffalse Iustyce  
 And lete hem come to þe barre þat oone with that other  
 Tho Gamelyn hadde þus ydone hadde he no reste 861  
 Tyll he hadde enquerede who was on the qweste  
 ffor to demen *sir* Ote his brother ffor to honge  
 Or he wyste whiche þey were itt þoughte hym to longe 864  
 Butte As soone as Gamelyn wyste where they were  
 He dydde hem euerychone fettren in ffore  
 And bryngen hem to the barre And sette hem in rewe  
 By my faythe sayde the Iustyce þe Schryve is A schrewe  
 Than sayde Gamelyn to the Iustyce 869  
 Thou haste youen domes of the worste Assye  
 And the xij sysours that weren of the qweste  
 They schulle to daye be hangede So god yeue me gode reste  
 Than sayde the Schryve to yonge Gamelyn 873  
 Lorde I crye the Mercye brother Arte thou Myne  
 Therefor sayde Gamelyn haue thou Cristes curse  
 ffor And thou were Mayster yett schulde I fiare worse [1179, bk]  
 ffor to make schorte tale And notte to longe  
 He ordeynede hym A qweste of his men so stronge  
 The Iustyce *and* the Schryve bothe hangede hye  
 To wayuen *with* the ropes And *with* the wynde drye 880  
 And the xij sisours Sorrowe haue þat recke  
 All they were hangede ffaste by the necke  
 Thus endede the ffalse knyghte *with* his treccherye  
 That euer hadde ledde his lyfe in ffalsenesse *and* ffollye 884

He was hangede by the necke *and* noughte by the purse  
 That was the Mede þat he hadde ffor his ffladers curse  
 Sir Ote was eldeste And Gamelyn was yonge  
 Wenten *with* her ffrendes *and* passede with the kynge 888  
 They made pease with the kynge on the beste syse  
 The kynge louede Sir Ote weþ And made hym Iustyce  
 And after the kynge made Gamelyn boþe in Este *and* Weste  
 Chyfe Iustyce of his fre fforeste 892  
 Aþ his wyghte yonge Men þe kynge foryaue her gylte  
 And sythen in gode office þe kynge hadde aþ hem pylte  
 Thus wyse wanne Gamelyn his londe *and* his lede  
 And wrake hym of his ennemyes And qwytted hem her Mede  
 And Sir Ote his brother Made hym his heyer 897  
 And sythen weddede Gamelyn A wyfe boþe gode *and* ffayer  
 They lyueden togider whyle that Criste wolde  
 And sythen was Gamelyn grauen vnder Molde 900  
 And So schaff we aþ Maye þer no Man flee  
 God brynge vs to the Ioye þat euer schaff be  
**Here endith the tale of the Coke**

[NOTICE—Inasmuch as, after the *Man of Law's Tale*, the order of the Tales in the *Cambridge MS* differs from the right order of the Tales in which the *Six-Text* is to be arranged, the further issue of the separate Cambridge Parts is suspended till all the Tales before the *Shipman's* in the Cambridge MS have been issued in the *Six-Text*. Then the proper pagings of the separate Cambridge sheets can be ascertained, and a large Part will be issued, bringing the separate issue abreast of the *Six-Text*. See the following scheme :—

<i>Six-Text</i>		<i>Cambridge MS.</i>	
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	<i>rest of</i>		
Group B	{ <i>SHIPMAN</i>	Group D	{ <i>Wife of Bath</i>
	<i>Prioress</i>		<i>Friar</i>
	<i>Thopas</i>		<i>Summoner</i>
	<i>Melibeus</i>	Group E	{ <i>Clerk</i>
	<i>Monk</i>		<i>Merchant</i>
	<i>Nun's Priest</i>		
Group C	{ <i>Doctor</i>	Group F	{ <i>Squire</i>
	<i>Pardoner</i>		<i>Franklin</i>
Group D	{ <i>Wife of Bath</i>	Group C	{ <i>Doctor</i>
	<i>Friar</i>		<i>Pardoner</i>
	<i>Summoner</i>		
Group E	{ <i>Clerk</i>	rest of	{ <i>SHIPMAN</i>
	<i>Merchant</i>		
Group F	{ <i>Squire</i>		
	<i>Franklin</i>		
Group G	{ <i>Second Nun</i>		
	<i>Canon's Yeoman</i>		
Group H	<i>Manciple</i>	Group G	{ <i>Second Nun</i>
			<i>Canon's Yeoman</i>
Group I	<i>Parson</i>	Group H	<i>Manciple</i>
		Group I	<i>Parson</i> ]

1 January, 1871.





## GROUP B. (α. FRAGMENT II.)

### § 1. MAN OF LAW'S HEAD-LINK.

#### CAMBRIDGE MS.

[*Harleian MS 1758, leaf 55, back.*]

Here begynneth the Prolog of the man of lawe.

ure Oste saugh weþ that the bright sonne.

o The arke of his artafricaþ day had ronne .

The fourthe parte & half an houre & more .

And though he were not deep experte in lore . 4

He wist it was the .xviij. day .

Of Aprill that is messenger/ to May .

And saugh weþ that the schadow of euery tre .

Was as in lengthe the same quantite . 8

That was the body erecte that causid it . [Harl. extract ends]

And þerfore by þe schadewe he tok hese wit [Camb. MS, leaf 194]

That phebus which þat schon so cler & bryzt

Degreis fyue & forty I-clombe on hyzt 12

And for þat day as in þat latytude

It was ten of þe klok he gan conclude

And sodeynly he plyzte hese hors a-boute

Lordyngis quod he I warne 3ow al þis route 16

The fourte party of þis day is gon

Now for þe loue of god & seynt Iohn

Leseth no tyme as fer forth as 3e may

Lordyngis it wastyth nyzt & day 20

And stelyth from vs what priuily slepynge

And what þerwith necligence In oure wakynges

As doth þe strem þat turnyth neuere a-geyn

Dessendynge from þe monteyn In-to pleyne 24

Wel can senykeke & manye a phylisofere

Bewaylyn tyme more þan gold in cofere

ffor los of catel may recouerede be

But los of tyme schendyth vs quod he 28

It wele not come a-geyn <i>with-outyn drede</i>	
No more þan wele malkenys maydynhede	
Whan sche hath lost it in here wantounnesse	
Let vs not moulyn þus in ydylnesse	32
Syre man of lawe so haue 3e blys	
Telle vs a tale now as forward is	
3e ben submyttit þour 3oure fre assent	
To stondyn in þis cas at myn Iugement	36
A-quythit 3ow now of 3oure be-heste	
þanne haue 3e don 3oure deuyr at þe leste	
Host <i>quod</i> he depardeux I assente	
To brekyn forward is not myn entente	40
Byheste is dette & I wele holde fayn	
Al myn beheste I can no betere seyn	
ffor swich lawe as man 3euyth a-noþer wyȝt	
He schulde hym selue vse it be right	44
Thus wele oure tyxt / but natheles serteyn	
I can not now non thrifty tale seyn	[leaf 194, back]
That Chaucer thoughte he can but lewedely	
On metris & on rymyng craftyly	48
As seyde hem in swich engelych as he can	
Of olde tyme as knowyth manye a man	
And ȝif he haue not seyde hem leue broþer	
In on bok he hath seyde hem in a noþer	52
ffor he hath told of louerys vp & down	
Mo þan ouyde made of mencyoun /	
In hese episteff þat ben ful olde	
What schulde I telle hem syn þat þey ben tolde	56
In ȝouth he made of Ceys & alceoun	
And syþe hap he spoke of euerychon	
These nobele wyuys & þese louteris ek	
Who so þat wole hese large volum sek	60
Clepid þe seyntis legende of cupide	
There may he se þe large woundis wyde	
Of lucesse & of babiloyn Tisbee	
The swerd of dido for þe false Enee	64

The tre of philt for here demephoun  
 The pleynt of dyane & of hermyoun  
 Of adryane & of Isiphilee  
 The barayne yle standynge in þe se 68  
 The dreynte leandere for hese erro  
 The terys of elyne & ek þe wo  
 Of brixseyde & of þe ladomya  
 The cruelte of þe quene media 72  
 Thy lityl childeryn hangynge by þe hals  
 ffor thy Iason þat was in loue so fals  
 O ypermystre penolopee Alceste  
 3oure wifhod be commendit with þe beste 76  
 But serteynly no word wryty[t]h he  
 Of thilk ensaumple of Canacee  
 That louede here owene broþer synfully  
 Of swiche cursede storyis I seye fy 80  
 Or ellis of Thiro appolonyus  
 [How þe cursid kynge Anciocus [Sloane MS 1685, leaf 63.]  
 Byrafte hys douȝtir hir Maydenhede  
 þat ys so horrible a tale for to here 84  
 Whan he hir þrowe þorough þe pament  
 And þ[er]fore he of full avisement  
 Wolde nevere write in none of his sermones  
 Of whiche vnkynde abhomynacioñs 88  
 Ne I ne wil non reherse if þat I may  
 But of my tale how shalle doo þis day  
 Me were lothe he lykned douteles  
 To Muses þat men clepen pieriedes 92  
 Metham-orphaseos wot wat y mene  
 But natheles I ne reche not a bene  
 Thoughe ·y· come after hym with aw bake  
 I speke in prose & let hym Rymes make 96  
 And with þat worde he with a sobre chere  
 By-gan his tale as ye shul after here 98  
 Here endithe þe prolooge & bygynnithe þe tale

[No break in the MS here or between the stanzas.]

## [THE PROLOGUE.]

O hatfulle harme condicioñ of pouert [Sloane MS 1685]  
 With thrust with colde with hungre so confunded  
 To asken helpe þe shameth in þine hert  
 If þou now axe with nede arte þou so wounded  
 That verray nede vnwrappid al þi wounde hyd [leaf 63, back]  
 Maugre þine hede þou moste for Indegens  
 Or stele or begge or borowe þi dispense 105

Thou blamest crist & seyst fulle vtterly  
 He in his departith rychesse temporal  
 Thy neghbourne þou witest synfully  
 And seyste þou haste to lytelle & he hath alle 109  
 Par fay seyste þou some tyme þou reken shalle  
 Whan þat his tayle shal brenne in þe glede  
 ffor he nouzt helpith nedefulle in her nede 112

Herkene what ys þe menyng of þe wise  
 Bet is to dien þan to haue Indigence ·  
 Thy self neghbore wol þe dispice  
 If þou be pore fare wele þi reuerence 116  
 3et of þe wise man take þis sentence ·  
 Alle dayes of pore men be wykke  
 Be ware þefore or þou com in þat prik / 119

If þou be pore þi Brother hatith þe  
 Alle þi ffrendes fleen fro þe Allas ·  
 O riche merchantes ful of wele be 3e<sup>1</sup>  
 O noble prudent folke as in þis cas<sup>1</sup>  
 youre bagges buth not fullyd with ambes ais  
 But with sys synke þat renneth of your chaunce ·  
 At cistes masse merie may ye daunce. 126

[<sup>1</sup> The MS trans-  
 poses these two  
 lines.]

3e sechen londe and See for your' wynnynge  
 As wyse folkes þat knowen alle þe staat /  
 Of regnes ye ben fadres & tydynge  
 And tales bothen of pees & debate 130  
 I were riȝt nowe of talys dissolate  
 Nere þat a marchaunt goon ys many 'a' yeere  
 Me taught' a tale whiche as ȝe shal here [Sloane extract ends.]

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[Lines 981-7, p. 161, are repeated in the MS, leaf 208. Here is the second version, marked, in a later hand, *vatat, for vacat*, at the side:—

This senatourys wif hyre aunte was  
 But for al þat sche knew hyre neuere þe more  
 I wele no lengere taryen in þis cas  
 But to kyng alla which I spak of ȝore  
 That for his wyf wepith & sykyth sore  
 I wele returne & lete I wele custauce  
 Vndyr þe senatourys gouernaunce]



## [THE TALE.]

## [PART I.]

- In Surry whilom dwellede a c[u]mpaignye [Cambridge MS,  
leaf 196.]  
 Of chapmen riche & þerto sadde & trewe  
 That wide where sentyn here spicerye  
 Clothis of gold & satynys ryche of hewe 137  
 Here chaffare was so thrifty & so newe  
 That euery wight hath deynte to chaffare  
 With hem & ek to sellen hem here ware 140
- Now fil it that þe maysteris of þat sort  
 Han shapyn hem to rome for to wende  
 Were it for chapmanhod or for disport  
 Non oper message wolde he dedyr sende 144  
 But comyn hem self to rome þis is thende  
 And in swich place as thoghte hem thawauntage  
 ffor hire entent þey take hire herbergage 147
- Soiournyd han þese marchauntis in þat toun  
 A serteyn tyme as fel to here plesaunce  
 But so be-fel þat thexsellent renoun  
 Of themperourys doghter dame Custaunce 151  
 Reportid was with euery circumstance  
 Vn-to thys surryne marchantys in swich wise  
 ffrom day to day as I schal 3ow deuyse 154
- This was the comune voys of euery man  
 Oure emperoure of rome god hym se  
 A doughtir hath þat syn þe world be-gan  
 To rekene as wel here goodnes as here beute 158  
 Was neuere swich a-noper as is sche  
 I preye to god in honour here sustene  
 And wolde sche were of al Europe þ<sup>e</sup> quene 161

In here is high beute *with-out*e pryde  
 3outhe *with-out*e grenehede or folye<sup>1</sup> [1 in a later hand]  
 To alle here werkys vertu is here gyde  
 Humblesse hath slayn in here al tyrannye 165  
 Sche is myrour of alle curteysye  
 Here herte is verray chambyr<sup>2</sup> of holynesse [2 or chambur]  
 Hire hand mynystre of fredom for almesse 168

And al þis voys was soth as god is trewe [leaf 196, back]  
 But now to purpos lat vs turne ageyn  
 These marchantys han don frauȝt here schepis newe  
 And whan þey han þis blysful maydyn seyn 172  
 Hom to surry ben þey went ful feyn  
 And on here nedys as þey<sup>3</sup> don ful ȝore [3 han put-in in a later hand]  
 And lyuen in wele I can sey ȝow no more 175

Now fil it þat these marchantys stode in grace  
 Of hym þat was þe soudon of surrye  
 ffor whan þey come from ony strange place  
 He wolde of hese benygne curteysye 179  
 Make hem good cher & besyly espye  
 Tydyngis of sundery regnys for to lere  
 The wonderis þat he myȝhte sen or here 182

Amongis opere thyngis specially  
 These marchauntis han hym told of dame Custaunce  
 So gret noblesse in earnest certeynly  
 That this soudan hath cauȝt so gret plesaunce 186  
 To han hyre fygure in hese remembraunce  
 And al hese lust & al hese besy cure  
 Was for to loue here whil his lyf may dure 189

Perauenture in thilke large boke  
 Which þat clepid is þe heuene I-wretyn was  
 With sterryys whan þat he hese berthe tok  
 That he for loue schulde han hese deth allas 193

ffor in þe sterris clerere than is glas  
 Is wrete god wot ho so coude it rede  
 The deth of euery man / with outyn any drede 196

In sterrys manye a wyntyr there be-forn  
 Was wretyn þe deth of ector achilles  
 Of pompeye Ielyus er þey were born  
 The stryf of thebes & of hereules 200  
 Of sampson Thurnus & of socrates  
 The deth but menys wittys ben so dulle  
 That no with can wel rede it at þe fulle 203

This soudon for hese priuy conseyl sente [leaf 197]  
 And schortely of þis matiere for to pace  
 He hath to hem declarede his entente  
 And seyde serteyn but he myzte han grace 207  
 To han custauce with-inne a lytyl space  
 He nas but ded & chargede hem in hye  
 To schapyn for hese lyf sum remedye 210

Dyuerse men dyuerse thyngys seydyn  
 They argumentyn & castyn vp & doun  
 Manye a subtyl resoun forth þey leydyn  
 They spekyn of Magyk & Abusioun 214  
 But fynally as in conclusioun  
 They can not sen in that non auantage  
 Ne in non othir woye saue maryage 217

Thanne sawe they þerin swich difficulte  
 Be weye of resoun for to speke al pleeyn  
 Be cause þere was / swich dyuercyte  
 Be-twethyn here bothe lawys þat þey seyn 221  
 They trowede that no crystene prynce wolde fayn  
 Weddyn his chyld vndyr oure lawys swete  
 That vs was tauzt be mahoun oure prophete 224

And he answerde rapere than I lese  
 Constance I wele ben cristened douteles  
 I mote ben hers / I may non oper chese  
 I prey 3ow holde 3oure argument in pes 228  
 Sauyth myn lyf & beth nat recheles  
 To getyn here that hath myn lyf in cure  
 ffor in þis wo I may not longe endure 231

What nedyth grettere dilatacioun  
 I sey be tretys & enbassadrye  
 And bi þe popis mediacioun  
 And al the cherch & þe chyualrye 235  
 That in distruccioun of mametrye  
 And in ences of Crystes lawe dere  
 They ben ecordit so as 3e schal here 238

How þat the soudan & hese baronage [leaf 197, back]  
 And alle hese lyges schulde cristenede be  
 And he schal haue custauunce in maryage  
 And serteyn gold I not what quantyte 242  
 And heer to fyndyn sufficient suretee  
 This same a-cord was sworn on eyþer syde  
 Now fayre Custauunce al-my3ty god 3ow gyde 245

Now wolde sum men waytyn as I gesse  
 3it I schulde telle al þe puruyaunce  
 That þe emperour of his greete noblesse  
 Hath schapyn for hese doughtur<sup>1</sup> dame<sup>1</sup> Custauunce [altered]  
 Wel may men knowe þat so gret ordenaunce  
 May no man telle in swich a lytyl clause  
 As was arayed for so high a cause 252

Byschopis ben schapyn with here for to wende  
 Lordyngis ladyis knyztis of renoun  
 And opere folk I-nowe this is the ende  
 And notyfied is thorw out þe toun 256

That euery knyȝt with gret deuocioun  
 Schulde preye *crist* þat he this maryage  
 Receyue In gre & spede þis viage 259

The day is come of here departynge  
 I sey the woful fatal day is come  
 That þere may be no lengere tarynge  
 But forward þey hem drese alle & some 263  
 Custaunce that was with sorwe al ouyrcome  
 fful pale a-ryst & dreseth here to wende  
 ffor weel sche seeth there is non oþer ende 266

Allas no wondir is it þow sche wepte  
 That schal be sent in-to straunge nacioun<sup>1</sup> [1 altered]  
 ffor frendys that so tenderely here kepte  
 And to ben boundyn vndyr subieccyoun 270  
 Of on sche knowyth not hese condicioun  
 Housbondis ben alle goode & han been ȝore  
 That knowyn wyuys I dar sey ȝow no moore 273

ffadyr sche seyde þyn wrechede chyld Custaunce [leaf 198]  
 Thi ȝonge douȝty fosterede vp so softe  
 And ȝe myn modyr myn souereyn plesaunce  
 Ouer alle thyng out take cryst on lofte 277  
 Custaunce ȝore child hire recomaundyth ofte  
 Vn-to ȝoure grace for I schal to surrye  
 Ne schal I neuere sen ȝow more with eye 280

Allas vn-to þe barbre nacioun  
 I muste anon sithe þat it is ȝoure wille  
 But cryst þat starf for our redempeyoun  
 So ȝeue me grace hese hestis to fulfyllen 284  
 I wreche woman no fors thow I spille  
 Wemen are bore to thraldam & penaunce  
 And to ben vndyr manys gouernaunce 287



I trowe at troye whan pirrus brak þe wal  
 Or ylion brende at thebes the cetee  
 Nat rome for þe harm þorw hanybal  
 That romaynys han enqueschid tymys three 291  
 Nas herd swich tendere wepyng for pete  
 As in the chaumbere was for here departyng  
 But forth sche muste / where so sche wepe or syng 294

O fyrste moeuyng crewel fymament  
 With thi dyurnal which þat croudist ay  
 And hurlyst al from est til occident  
 That naturally wolde holde a-noþer way 298  
 Thi croudyng set þe heuene in swich aray  
 At þe begynnyng of this ferse viage  
 That crewel mars hath slaye þis maryage 301

Infortunat ascendent tortuous  
 Of which þe lord is helpeles falle allas  
 Out of hese angels in-to þe derkeste hous  
 O mars o atazer as in this cas 305  
 O febele mone vn-happi ben thi pas  
 Thow knyttist þe þere þat art not reseuyd  
 There þow were wel from thens art thow weuyd 308

Inprudent Emperour of Rome allas [leaf 198, back]  
 Whas þere no philisophere in al thyn toun  
 Is no tyme bet þan oþer in swich cas  
 Of viage is þere non eleccioun 312  
 And namely to folk of high condicioun  
 Nat whan a rote is of a burthe I-knowe  
 Allas we ben to lewede & to slowe 315

To schip is brouȝt this woful fayre mayde  
 Solempnely with euery circumstance  
 Now Ihesu crist be with ȝow alle sche seide<sup>1</sup> [<sup>1</sup> altered from sende]  
 There is namore but fare wel fayre Custaunce 319

Sche peynyth here to make good cuntenaunce  
 And forth I lete here sayle in this manere  
 And turne I wele a-geyn to myn matere 322

The modyr of the soudon welle of vices  
 Espyed hath here sonys pleynt entente  
 How he wolde lete his olde sacrifises  
 And ryȝt a-non sche for here conseyl sente 326  
 And they be come to knowe what sche mente  
 And whan assembeled were þe folk en feere  
 Sche sette here down & seyde as ȝe schal here 329

Lordys *quod* sche ȝe heryn euerychon  
 How þat myn sone in poynt is for to lete  
 The holy lawis of oure alkaron  
 Ȝeuen be goddys message Makomete 333  
 But on a wow to grete god I heete  
 The lyf schal rapere out of myn body sterte  
 On makometes lawe out of myn herte 336

What schulde vs tydyn of this newe lawe  
 But thraldam to oure bodyis & penaunce  
 And aftyr in helle for to be drawe  
 ffor we reneyede mahoun oure creaunce 340  
 But lordis wele ȝe makyn a suraunce  
 As I schal seyn assentyng to myn lore  
 And I schal make vs saf for euere more 343

They sworyn & assentyn euery man [leaf 199]  
 To lyue with hyre & deye & by here stonde  
 And eueryche in þe beste wyse sche can  
 To strenthe here schal alle here frendis fonde 347  
 And sche hath this empyrse take on honde  
 Whiche ȝe schal here that I schal deuyse  
 An[d] to hem alle sche spak ryth in þis wyse 350

We schul fyrst feyne vs cristene-dam to take  
 Cold watyr schal nat greue vs but a lite  
 And I schal swich a feste & reuel make  
 That as I trowe I schal the soudon quyte 354  
 ffor thow hese wyf be crystenede neuere so whyte  
 Sche schal han neede to wasche a-wey the reede  
 Thow sche a funt ful of watyr with here leede 357

O soudonesse roote of iniquite  
 Virago thow semiamie the secunde  
 O serpent vndyr femynynyte  
 Lyk to the serpent deepe in helle I-bounde 361  
 O feynede woman al that may conffounde  
 Vertu & innocence thour thyn maleyce  
 Is bred in þe / as nest in euery vice 364

O satan enuyous syn thilke day  
 That þou were chasede þour oure erytage  
 Wel knowyst þou to wemen þe elde way  
 Thow madist eua brynge vs in seruage 368  
 Thow wilt for-dor this cristene maryage  
 Thyn Instreument so weyleawey the whyle  
 Makyst þou of wemen wan þou wit begile 371

This soudonesse whom I þus blame & warye  
 Let pryuyly hire conseyl gon here way  
 What schulde I in this tale lengere tarye  
 Sche rydith to þe soudan on a day 375  
 And seyde he wolde receyue hire lay  
 And cristendom of prestis hondis fonge  
 Repentyng hire sche hethene was so longe 378

Be-sekyng hem <sup>1</sup> to don here þat honour [leaf 199, back]  
 That sche muste haue þe crystene folk to feste [1 altered from here]  
 To plesyn hem I wele don myn labour  
 The soudon seyth I wele don at þoure heste 382

And kenelynge thankyth here of þat requeste  
 So glad he was he nyste what to seye  
 Sche kyste here sone / & hom sche goth here weye 385

## [PART II.]

Aryuede ben these crystene men to londe  
 In surrey with a gret solempne route  
 And hastiliche þis soudan sente hese sonde 389  
 ffyrst to hese modir & al hese regne a-boute  
 And seyde hese wyf was comyn out of doute  
 And preyede hire to ryde a-zen þe quene  
 The honour of hese regne to sustene 392

Gret was þe pres & riche was tharay  
 Of surreynys & romeynys met in fere  
 The modyr of the soudan ryche & gay  
 Receyuyth hire with also glad a chere 396  
 As any modir myzte hire douȝtyr dere  
 And to þe nexte sete þere be syde  
 A softe pas solempnely þey ryde 399

Noght trowe I þe triumphe of Iulius  
 Of which þat lucan makyth swich a bost  
 Was royallere ne more curyous  
 þan was thasemble of þis blysfyl ost 403  
 But þis scorioun þis wekede gost  
 The soudonesse for al hyre flaterynge  
 Caste vndyr this ful mortali to styngre 406

The soudan comyth hym self sone after this  
 So royali þat wondir is to telle  
 He wolcomyth hire with al ioye & blys  
 And þus in merthe & ioye I lete hem dwelle 410

The freut of this matiere is þat I telle  
 Whan tyme cam men thouȝte it for þe beste  
 That reuel stynte & men gone to here reste 413

The tyme cam this olde soudonesse [leaf 200]  
 Ordeynyd hath this feste of which I telle  
 And to þe feste cristene folk hym dresse  
 In general ȝe bothe ȝynge & olde 417  
 Here may men feste & rialte be-holde  
 And deynteis mo þan I can ȝow deuyse  
 But al to dere they bouȝte it er they ryse 420

O sodeyn wo that euere art successour  
 To wordely blysse spreynt with bittyrnesse  
 Thende of the ioie of oure wordely labour  
 Who occupiet the fyn of oure gladnesse 424  
 Herkenþ þis conseyll for thyn sekyrnesse  
 Vp-on thyn glade day haue in thyn mynde  
 The onwar wo or harm that comyth be-hynde 427

ffor schortely for to tellyn at on word  
 The soudon & the crystene euerychone  
 Ben al to-hewe & stikid at the bord  
 But it were only dame custaunce a-lone 431  
 This olde soudanesse cursede crone  
 Hath with here frendis don this cursede dede  
 ffor sche here selue wolde at the cuntre lede 434

Ne þere was surreyn non that was conuertid  
 That of the conseyll of the soudon wot  
 That he was hewe er that he a-started  
 And custaunce han they take a-non fot hot 438  
 And in a schip al stereles god wot  
 They han hire set & bidde hire lerne sayle  
 Out of surrie a-geyn ward to ytayle 441



A serteyn trosor that sche the~~per~~ ladde  
 And soth to sayn vitayle gret plente  
 They han hyre 3euyn & clothis ech sche hadde  
 And forth sche saylyth in the salte see 445  
 O myn custaunce ful of benyngnete  
 O emperouris douztyr 3onge dere  
 He that is lord of fortune be thi stere 448

Sche blysseth hire & with ful pitous voys [leaf 200, back]  
 On to the Croys of *crist* thus seyde sche  
 O cler o wilful auter holy cros  
 Reed of the lambis blod ful of pite 452  
 That wesch þe world from old iniquite  
 Me from the fend & from hese clawis kepe  
 That day þat I schal drenchyn in þe deepe 455

Victorious tre protexioun of trewe  
 That only worthy were for to bere  
 The kyng of heuene withese woundis newe  
 The white lomb that hurt was wyt a spere 459  
 flemere of feendis out of hym & hire  
 On which thyn lyfis feythfully extenden  
 Me kep & 3if me myzt myn lyf to a-menden 462

3eerys & dayis fleth this creature  
 Torw-out the strem of grece in-to straye  
 Of marrok whiche that was hese auenture  
 On manye a sory Mel now may 3e beyte 466  
 Aftyr hire deth ful ofte may sche wayte  
 Er than þe wylde wawys wole here dryue  
 Vn-to the place there sche schal a-ryue 469

Men myztyn axsyn whi sche was not slayn  
 Ek at the feste ho myzte hire body saue  
 And I answeze to that demaunde a-gayn  
 Ho sauede daniel in þe orybele caue 473

There euery with saue he maystyr & knave  
 Was with the lyoun frete er he a-sterre  
 Non wigh but god þat he bar in hese herte 476

God lyste to schewe his wondyrful merakele  
 In hire for we schud sen hise myzty werkys  
 Cryst which þat is / to euery harm tryakele  
 Be serteyn mene oftyn as knowyn klerkes 480  
 Doth thyng to serteyn ende þat ful derk is  
 To mannys wit that for oure ignoraunce  
 Ne kunne not knowe hese prudent puruyaunce 483

Now sythe sche was not at the feste slawee [leaf 201]  
 Who kepte hyre from the drenchyng in þe see  
 Who kepte Ionas in the fyschis mawee  
 Thil he was spoutid out at niniuee 487  
 Wel may men knowe it was no wigt but he  
 That kepte þe peple Ebrayk from here drenchyng  
 With dreye feet thorw-out þe se passynge 490

Who bad the foure spirytis of tempest'  
 That power han tanoyen lond & se  
 Bothe north & south & also west & est'  
 Anoyeth neyþer se lond ne tree 494  
 Sothly the comaundour was hee  
 That from the tempest ay<sup>1</sup> this<sup>1</sup> woman kepte [1 altered]  
 As wel whan sche wok as whan sche slepte 497

Where myzte this woman mete or drynk haue  
 Thre 3er & more how lastyth hire vitayle  
 Ho fedde þe egipeien marye in þe caue  
 Or in desert no wigt but crist sauns fayle 501  
 ffyue thousent folk it was a gret meruayle  
 With louys fyue & fyschis too to feede  
 God sente hese foyssoun at here moste neede 504

Sche dryuyth forth in-to oure occian  
 Thour-out oure wilde see til at þe laste  
 Vndyr an hold þat nemenyn I ne can  
 ffor in northumbyrlond the wawis hire caste 508  
 And in þe se hire schip stekede so faste  
 That þens ne wolde it not of al a tide  
 The wyl of here was þat sche schulde a-byde 511

The constabele of þe Castel doun is fare  
 To sen þis wrak & al þe schip he souzte  
 And fond þis wery woman ful of care  
 He fond also þe tresore þat sche brouzte 515  
 In hyre langage mercy sche be-souzte  
 The lyf out of hire body to twynne  
 Hire to delyuere of woo þat sche was inne 518

A maner latyn corrupt<sup>t</sup> was hire speche [leaf 201, back]  
 But algatis *perbi* was sche vndir-stonde  
 The Constabele whan hym lyste no lengere seche  
 This woful woman brouzte he to the londe 522  
 Sche knelyth doun & thankyth godis sonde  
 But what sche was sche durste no man seye  
 ffor foul ne fayr thow þat sche schulde deye 525

Sche seyde sche was so masede in the see  
 That sche forgot hire mynde by hyre<sup>1</sup> trouthe [1 altered]  
 The cunstabele hath of hire gret pite  
 And ek his wif that þey wepe for routhe 529  
 Sche was so diligent with-outyn slouthe  
 To serue & plesse eueryche in þat place  
 That alle hyre louyn þat lokyn in hyre face 532

This constabil & dame hermengylt his wyf  
 Were payenys in þat cuntrey euery where  
 But Ermengylt louede hire ryzt as hire lyf  
 And Custaunce hath so longe soiurnede pere 536

In orisounys *with* manye a bittere tere  
 Til Ihesu hath conuertede þour hese grace  
 Dame Ermengilt Constabellesse of þat place 539

In al þat lond no cristene durste at route  
 Alle cristen folk ben fled from þat cuntre  
 Thour poynmys þat conqueredyn al a-boute  
 The plagis of the north & se 543  
 To walis fledde þe cristianyte  
 Of olde brytunys dwellynge in þis yle  
 There was hire refeut for the mene while 546

But ȝit nere cristene britounys so exiled  
 þat þere nere some þat in hire priuite  
 Honourede crist & hethene folk begilede  
 And n[i]gh þe castel<sup>1</sup> swich<sup>1</sup> þere dweltyn thre [<sup>1</sup> altered] 550  
 That on of hem was blynd & myȝte not se  
 But it were with þe ilke eyen of hise mynde  
 Wit[h] whiche men sen aftyr þat þey ben blynde 553

Bryȝt was þe sune as in þat someris day [leaf 202]  
 ffor which þe Constabel & hese wyf also  
 And custauunce hath I-take þe ryȝte way  
 Toward þe se a furlong wey or to 557  
 To pleyen & to romyn too & fro  
 And in hire walk þis blynde man þey mette  
 Crokid & old with eyen fasto I-schette 560

In name of cryst cryede þis blynde Erytoun  
 Dame Hermengelt ȝif me myn syȝt a-geyn  
 This lady wex a-freyed of þe soun  
 Lest þat hire husbonde shortly for [to] seyn 564  
 Wolde hire for ihesu crist han slayn [<sup>2</sup> altered]  
 Til Custauunce made hire bold & bad hire for to werche<sup>2</sup>  
 The wil of crist as doughtyr of hise cherche 567

The Constabele wex a-baschid of that syȝt  
 And seyde what amounty[t]h al þis fare  
 Custaunce answerē syre it is cristis myȝt  
 That helpith folk out of þe fendis snare 571  
 And so fer forth sche gan oure lay declare  
 That sche þe Constabele er þan it was eue  
 Conuertid & on cryst made hym bileue 574

This Constabele was no þyng lord of þis place  
 Of whiche I speke þere he constaunce fond  
 But kepte it strongely manye a wynteris space  
 Vndir alla kyng of al northhumbir londe 578  
 That was ful wys & worthi of hese honde  
 A-geyn þe skottis as men may wel here  
 But turne I wele a-gen to myn matyere 581

Satan þat euere wayth vs to be-gyle  
 Saugh of Custaunce al þe perfeccioun  
 And caste a-non how he myȝte quite hire while  
 And made a ȝong kn[y]ght þat dwellede in þat toun 585  
 Loue hire so hote of foul affeccioun  
 That verayly hym thouȝte he schulde spille  
 But he of hire myȝte onys haue hese wille 588

He wowyth hire but it a-uaylyth nouȝt [leaf 202, back]  
 Sche wolde don no synne be no weye  
 And for dispit he compassith in his thouȝt  
 To makyn hyre on schamful deth to deye 592  
 He waythith whan þe Constable is a-weye  
 And priui vp-on a nyȝt he crepte  
 In-to Hermengildis chaumbere whil sche slepte 595

Wery for-wakede in hire orysouns  
 Slepith custaunce and hemegild also  
 This knyȝt þour satanys temptacions  
 Al softeli is to þe bed I-go 599



And kitte þe throte of Hermegild a too  
 And leyde þe blodi knyf be dame Custaunce  
 And wente his wey þere god 3yf hym myschaunce 602

Sone after comyth this Constabele hom ageyn  
 And ek .Alla. þat kyng was of þat lond /  
 And saw his wif dispitously I-slayn  
 ffor which ful ofte he wepte & wrong here hon[d] 606  
 And in þe bed þe bloody knyf he fond  
 By dame Constance Allas what myzte sche seye  
 ffor werray woo hire wit was al a-weye 609

To kyng alla was told þis tale Mischaunce  
 And ek þe tyme where & in what wyse  
 That in a schyp was founde þis eustaunce  
 As here be-forþ þat 3e han herd deuyse 613  
 The kyngis herte of pete gan to gryse  
 Whan he saw so benygne a creature  
 ffalle in desese & in mysaventure 616

ffor as þe lomb toward þe deth is brouȝt  
 So stant this innocent by-fore þe kyng  
 This false knyȝt that hath this tresoun wrought  
 Beryth hire on honde þat sche hath don þis thyng<sup>1</sup> 620  
 But natheles þere was gret mornyng [<sup>1</sup> altered]  
 A-mong the puple & seyn þey can not gesse  
 That sche hadde don so gret a wekedenesse 623

ffor they han seyn hire so vertuous [leaf 203]  
 And louynge hermengild ryȝt as hire lyf  
 Of þis bar witnesse eueryche in that hous  
 Saue he þat hermengelt slow with his knyf 627  
 This gentil kyng hath cauȝt a gret motyf  
 Of this witnesse & thoght he wolde enquire  
 Deppere in this trouthe for to lere 630

Allas Custaunce þou hast no chaumpioun  
 Ne fyzte canst þou so weyle-away  
 But he that starf for oure redempcioun  
 And bond satan & ȝit lyth þere he lay 634  
 So be þeyn stronge champioun þis day  
 ffor but ȝif cryst opyn merakele kythe  
 With-outyn gilt þou schat ben slayn aswythe 637

Sche sette hire down on kneis & thus sche seyde  
 Inmortal god þat sauedist susanne  
 ffrom false blame & þou merciful mayde  
 Marye I mene douȝtyr to seynt ann 641  
 By-forȝ hos child aungeȝ syngē osanne  
 If I be gilteles of this felonye  
 Myn socour be for ellis schal I deye 644

Han ȝe nat seyn sumtyme a pale face  
 Among a pres of hym þat hath be lad  
 Toward hese deth where as he gat no grace  
 And swich a colour in hese face hath had 648  
 Men myȝte knowe hise face þat was be-stad  
 Amongis alle þe facis in þat route  
 So stant custaunce & lokyth hire a boutē 651

O queenys lyuynge in prosperite  
 Duchesses & ȝe ladijs euerychone  
 Hauȝth sum routhe of hire aduercite  
 An emperouris douȝtyr stant a-lone 655  
 Sche hath no wyȝt to whom to make hire mone  
 O blood royal þat standyst in þis drede<sup>1</sup> [1 altered]  
 ffer ben thyne frendis at thi grete nede 658

This alla kyng hath swich compascioun [leaf 203, back]  
 As gentyl herte is ful fyld of pite  
 That from hyse eyen ran the watyr down  
 Now hastyfliche do feche a bok quod he 662

And ȝif this kn[y]ȝt wele swere þat sche  
 This woman slow ȝit wele we vs auyse  
 Hom þat we wele þat schal ben oure Iustyse 665

A brytoun bok wrytyn with euangilis  
 Was fet in on this bok he swor a-non  
 Sche gilty was & in the mene whilis  
 An hand hym smot vp-on the nekke bon 669  
 That doun he fyl a-tonys as a ston  
 And bothe hise eyen broste vp on hise face  
 In syȝte of euery body in þat place 672

A woys was herd in general audience  
 And seyde þou hast disclaunderede gilteles  
 The douȝtyr of holy cherche in high presence  
 Thus hast þou don & ȝit I holde myn pees 676  
 Of this mervayle a-gast was al þe pres  
 As masede folk they stodyn euerychone  
 flor drede of wreche saue Custaunce allone 679

Gret was þ<sup>e</sup> dred & ek þ<sup>e</sup> repentaunce  
 Of hem þat han wrong suspeciouȝ  
 Vp-on þis sely Innocent custaunce  
 And for this myrakele in conclusioun 683  
 And by Custauncis mediacioun  
 The kyng & manye a noþer in þat place  
 Conuertede were thankid be godis grace 686

This false knyȝt was slayn for hise ontrouthe  
 Be Iugement of alla hastifly  
 And ȝit Custaustaunce hadde of hise deth routhe  
 And aftyr this Ihesus<sup>1</sup> of hise mercy [1 line] 690  
 Made alla weddyn solempnely  
 This holy maydyn þat is so bryȝt & scheene  
 And þus hath Cryst mad Custaunce a queene 693

But who was woful ȝif I se[h]al not lye [leaf 204]  
 Of this weddyng but donegild & no mo  
 The kyngis modir ful of tyrannye  
 Hire thouȝt hire curssede herte brast a to 697  
 Sche wolde not hire sone hadde don so  
 Hire thouȝte a dispit þat he schulde take  
 So straunge a creature vn-to hise make 700

Me lyste not of þe chaf nor of þe stre  
 Makyn so long a tale as of þe corn  
 What sholde I telle of the royalte  
 At mariage or wiche cours goth be-forn 704  
 Who blowith in a trompe or in an horn  
 The freut of eueri tale is for to seye  
 They ete & drynke & daunce & synge & pleye 707

Thei gon to bedde as it was skele & ryȝt  
 ffor þow þat wiuiys ben ful holye thyngis  
 They muste takyn in pacience at nyȝt  
 Swiche manere of necessarijs as ben plesyngis 711  
 To folk þat han wedit hem with ryngis  
 And leyn a lityl here holynesse a-syde  
 As for þe tyme it may non oþer be-tyde 714

On hire he gat a knave child a-non  
 And to a bischop & his constabele ek  
 He tok hise wyf to kepe whan he is gon  
 To skotlandeward hise fomen for to seke 718  
 Now fayre custaunce þat is so vmbles & meke  
 So longe is gon with childe til þat stille  
 Sche halt hire chaumbere a-bydyng cristis wille 721

The tyme is come a knaue child sche beere  
 Mauricyus at þe funtston þey hym calle  
 This Constabele doth forth<sup>1</sup> a massanger [<sup>1</sup> clepe put at the side,  
 And wrot on-to his kyng þat clepid was alle later] 725

How þat this blisful tydyng is byfalle  
 And opere tydyngis spedful for to seye  
 He taath þe lettere & forth he goth hise weye 728

This massanger to don his auauantage [leaf 204, back]  
 Vn-to þe kyngis modyr ridyð swythe  
 And saluyth hire ful fare in hyre langage  
 Madame *quod* he 3e may ben glad & blyþe 732  
 And thankede god a hunderede thousent sythe  
 Myn lady quen hath child with-outyn doute  
 To Ioye & blysse to al þe regne a-boute 735

Lo here þe letteris selede of þis thyng  
 That I mot bere with þe haste I may  
 3if 3e wele ouzt on-to 3oure sone þe kyng  
 I am 3oure seruauant bothe nyȝt & day 739  
 Donegild answerede as now at þis tyme nay  
 But here al nyght I wele þou take þyn reste  
 To morwe wele I seye þe what me leste 742

This massangere drank faste ale & wyn  
 And stole were hise letteris priuily  
 Out of his box whil he slepte as a swyn  
 And countyrfetid was ful subtilly 746  
 Anoper lettere wrouȝt ful synfully<sup>1</sup> [1 altered]  
 Vn-to þe kyng direckt of this matere  
 ffrom his Constabil as 3e schal aftyr here 749

The lettere spak þe quen delyuerede was  
 Of so orible & fendlyche cryature  
 That in þe castel non so hardy was  
 That ony while durste þere endure 753  
 The modyr was an elf be nature  
 I-comyn by charmys or bi socerye  
 And euery wyȝt hath hire cumpanye 756



Wo was this kyng whan he þis lettere hath seyn  
 But to no wyȝt he tolde hise sorwis sore  
 But of hyse owene hand he wrot a-geyn  
 Wolcome þe sonde of cryst for euere more 760  
 To me that am now lernede in þis lore  
 Lord wolcome be thyn lust & þyn plesaunce  
 Myn lust I putte al in thyn ordenaunce 763

Kepith this child al be it foul or fayr [leaf 205]  
 And ek myn wyf on-to myn hom comynge  
 Cryst whan hym lyste may sende me an eyr  
 More agriable þan this to myn<sup>1</sup> lykyng<sup>1</sup> [1 altered] 767  
 This lettere he selyth pryuyly wepyng  
 Whiche to þe massangere was take sone  
 And forth he goth þere is no more to done 770

O Massanger fulfild of dronkenesse  
 Strong is thi breth thi lemys falteryn ay  
 And þou be-wreyest alle sekere-nesse  
 Thyn mynde is lorn þou iangelist as a Iay 774  
 Thyn face is turnede in a newe aray  
 There dronkenesse regnyth in ony route  
 There is no conseyl hid with-outyn doute 777

O donegilt I haue non engelishsh dygne  
 Vn-to þyn maleys & thi tyrannye  
 And þerfore to þe fend I þe resigne  
 Let hym endyte of thyn tratorye 781  
 ffy mannyssh fy / o nay by god I lye  
 ffy fendelyche spirit for I dar wel telle  
 Thow þow here walke thyn spyrit is in helle 784

This Massanger comyth from þe kyng a-geyn  
 And at þe kyngis moderis court he lyghte  
 And sche was of þe massenger ful fayn  
 And plesede hym in al þat euere sche myȝte 788

He drank & wel hise gerdyl vndyr pyȝt  
 He slepith & he snortith in hise gyse  
 Al nyȝt tyl þe suzne gan a-ryse 791

Eft were hise letterys stolyn euerychon  
 And counterfetid letterys in þis wyse  
 The kyng comaundyth hise constablis a-non  
 Vp peyne of hangynge & heigh Iuyse 795  
 That he ne schulde suffere in no wyse  
 Custaunce in whith<sup>1</sup> his regne for tabyde [*1 altered from whiche*]  
 Thre dayis & a quartyr of a tide 798

But in þe same schip as he hire fond [leaf 205, back]  
 Hire & hyr ȝenge sone & al hire geere  
 He schulde putte & croude from þe lond  
 And charge hire þat sche neuere eft come þere 802  
 O myn custaunce wel may þy gost haue fere  
 And slepynge in þyn drem han penaunce  
 Whan donegilt caste al þis ordenaunce 805

This messenger on morwe he wok  
 On-to þe castel holt þe neste wey  
 And to þe constabele he þe lettere tok  
 And whan þat he þis pitous lettere say 809  
 fful ofte he seyde allas & weyle-away  
 Lord crist how may þis world endure  
 So ful of synne is manye a cryature 812

O myȝti god ȝif þat it be þyn wille  
 Sith þou art ryȝtful Iuge how may þis be  
 That þou wit suffere innocentis to spille  
 And wekede folk regnyn in prosperite 816  
 O goode Custaunce allas so wo is me  
 þat I mote be þyn turmentour or deye  
 On schamys deth þere is non oper weye 819

Wepyn bothe ȝynge & olde in þat place  
 Whan þat þe kyng his cursede letere sente  
 And Custaunce with a dedly pale face  
 The forte day toward hire schip sche wente 823  
 But natheles sche takyth in good entente  
 The wil of crist & knelynge on þe stronde  
 Sche seyde lord ay wolcome be þyn sonde 826

He þat me kepte from þe false blame  
 Whil I was on þe lond a-mongis ȝow  
 He can me kepe from harm & ek from schame  
 In þe salte se al þow I se nat how 830  
 As strong as euere he was he is now  
 In hym troste I & hyse modyr dere  
 That is to me myn sayl & ek myn stere 833

Hyre lytyl child lay wepyng in hire arm [leaf 206]  
 And knelynge pitously to hym sche seyde  
 Pes lityl sone I wele don þe non harm  
 With þat hire couerchif ouer hire hed sche bryde 837  
 And ouer hise lityl eyen sche it leyde  
 And in hyre arm sche lullede it ful faste  
 And in-to heuene hyre eyen vp sche caste 840

Modyr quod sche & mayde / bryȝte marye  
 Soth is þat þow wemanys eggement  
 Man kynde was lorn & dampnede for to deye  
 ffor wich þyn chyld was on a cros I-ret 844  
 Thi blysful eyen saw al his turment  
 Thanne is þere non comparisoun be-twene  
 Thi wo & any wo / man may sustene 847

Thow saw þyn child slawyn be-fore þyn eyen  
 And ȝit now lyuyth my lityl child parfey  
 Now lady bryȝt to whom alle folk now cryen  
 Thow glorie of womanhede fayre may 851

Thow hauene of refut bryȝte sterre of day  
 Rewe on myn child þat of þyn gentillesse  
 Rewist on euery reuful in destresse 854

O lityl child allas what is þyn gilt  
 That neuere wroughtist synne as ȝit parde  
 Whi wolde thyn harde fadyr han þe spilt  
 O mercy dere constabele *quod* sche 858  
 As lat myn lytil child dwelle here *with* þe  
 And ȝif þou darst not sauyn hym from blame  
 So kysse hym onys in hese faderys name 861

Ther*with* sche lokith bakward to þe londe  
 And seyde farewe[1] housbonde routheles  
 And vp sche rist & walkyth down þe stronde  
 Toward þe schip here folwyth al þe pres 865  
 And euere sche preyeth hire child to holde hise pes  
 And takyth hire leue & with an holy entente  
 Sche blysseth hire & in-to schip sche wente 868

Vitaylid was þe schip it is no drede [leaf 206, back]  
 Habundaunt for hyre ful longe space  
 And oþere necessaryis þat schuldyn nede  
 Sche hadde I-now haryed be godis grace 872  
 ffor wynd & wedyr al-myȝty god purchase  
 And brynge hire hom I can no betere seye  
 But in þe se sche dryuyth forth hire weye 875

[PART III.]

Alla þe kyng comyth hom soone aftyr þis  
 On-to þe Castel whiche I tolde  
 And axsith where þat his wif & his child is  
 The Constabele gan a-boute hise herte colde 879

And pleynly al þe manere hym tolde  
 As ȝe han herd I can telle it no better  
 As schewith þe kyng his sel & hise lettere 882

And seyde lord as ȝe comaundede me  
 Vp peyne of deth so haue I do serteyn  
 This massanger turmentid was tyl he  
 Moste beknowe & telle plat & pleyn 886  
 ffrom nyzt to nyzt what place he hadde leyn  
 And þus by wit & subtyl Inquiryng  
 Ymagined was bi hom þis harm gan sprynge 889

The hand was knowe þat þe lettere wrot  
 And al þe venym of þis cursede dede  
 But in what wise serteynli I not  
 Theffect is þis þat Alla out of drede 893  
 His modyr slow þat may men pleynly rede  
 ffor þat sche traytour was to hire legiaunce  
 Thus endyth donegild with myschaunce 896

The sorwe þat þis alla nyzt & day  
 Makith for his wif & hise child also  
 Ther is no tunge þat it telle may  
 But now wolde I on-to Custaunce go 900  
 That fletyth in þe se in peyne & wo  
 ffyue ȝer & more as lykede cristis sonde  
 Er þat hir schip aprochede to þe londe 903

Vndyr an hethene castel at þe laste [leaf 207]  
 Of which þe name in myn tixt not I fynde  
 Custaunce & ek hire child þe se vp caste  
 Almyȝty god þat sawith al mankynde 907  
 Haue on custaunce & of hire child sum mynde  
 that is fallyn in hethene hand eft sone  
 In poynt to spyll as I schal telle ȝow sone 910



Doun from þe castel comyth þere manye a wyzt  
 To gauryn on þis wyzt & on custauce  
 But schortly from þe castel on a nyzt  
 The lordis styward god 3eue hym myschaunce 914  
 A thef that hadde reneyed oure cre-aunce  
 Cam in-to þe schip alone & seyde he schulde  
 Hire leman be wheþer sche wolde or nolde 917

Wo was þe wrechede woman þo be-gon  
 Hire child cryed & sche cryede pitously  
 Blysful marye halp hyre ryzt a-non  
 ffor with hire strogelyng wel & myztly 921  
 The thef fel ouyr bord al sodeynly  
 And in þe se he dreynte for veniaunce  
 And þus hath cryst onwemmede kept custauce 924

O foule lust of luxurye lo thyn ende  
 Not only þat þou feyntist many's mynde  
 But verayly þou wilt hise body schende  
 Thende of þy werk or of þynne lustis blynde 928  
 Is compleynyng how manyon may men fynde  
 That not for werk but only þe entente  
 To don þis synne ben owthir slayn or schente 931

How may þis wayke woman han þis strenthe  
 Hire to defende a-3en þis Renegat  
 O golyas vnmesurabe of lenthe  
 How myzte dauid make þe so maat 935  
 So 3ong & of armeure so desolat  
 How durste he loke vp-on þyn dredful face  
 Wel may men sen it was but godis grace 938

Ho 3af Iudyth corage or hardynesse [leaf 207, back]  
 To slen hym Olofernus in hise tente  
 And to delyueryn out of wrechedenesse  
 The peple of god I sey for þis entente 942

But ryȝt as god spyrit of vigour sente  
 To hym & sauede hym from myschaunce  
 So sente vigour & myȝt to Custaunce 945

fforth goth the schip *pour*-out þe narwe mouth  
 Of Iubaltare / and Cepte dryuyngē ay  
 Sumtyme west & sumtyme north & south  
 And sumtyme est ful many a wery day 949  
 Til Cristis modyr blyssede be sche ay  
 Hath schapyn *pour* hire endeles goodnesse  
 To make an ende of al hire heuynesse 952

Now lat vs stynte of Custaunce but a trowe  
 And speke we of þe romayn Emperour  
 That out of surry hath bi letterys knowe  
 The slauthe of Cristene folk & dishonoure<sup>1</sup> [1 Peure] 956  
 Don to his douȝtyr by a fals traytoure  
 I mene þe wikkede cursede soudonesse  
 That at þe feste let sle bope more & lesse 959

ffor which þis emperour hath sent a-nor  
 His senatour with royal ordenaunce  
 And opere lordis god wot many on  
 On surryens to take veniaunce 963  
 They brenne & slen & brynge hem to myschaunce  
 fful manyaday but schortly þis is þe ende  
 Homward to rome þey schapyn hem to wende 966

This senatour repayreth wictorye  
 To romeward saylyngē ful ryalye  
 And mette þe schyp dryuyngē as seyth þe story  
 In which Custaunce sit pitously 970  
 No þyng knewe he what sche was ne why  
 Sche was in swich a-ray / ne sche wolde seye  
 Of hyre estat þow sche schulde deye 973

He bryngith hire to rome & to hise wyf [leaf 208]

He 3af hire & hire 3onge sone also

And with þe senatour sche ledde hire lyf

Thus can oure lady bryngyn out of wo 977

Woful custaunce & manye a noþer mo

And long tyme dwellede sche in þat plase

In holye werkys euere as was hyre grace 980

This senatourys wyf hyre aunte was

But for al þat sche knew hyre neuere þe more

I wele no lengere taryen in þis cas

But to kyng alla which I spak of 3ore 984

That for hise wyf wepede & syghede sore

I wele retorne & lete I wele Custaunce

Vndyr þe senatourrys gouernaunce [This stanza is repeated in the MS. See the second version on p. 133 above]

Kyng Alla wiche þat hadde hise modyr slayn

Vp-on a day fil In swich repentaunce

That 3if I schortely schulde telle & playn

To rome he comyth to receyue hese penaunce 991

And putte hym in þe popis ordenaunce

In high & logh & Ihesu crist be-souzte

ffor3eue hise wikke werkis þat he wrouzte 994

The fame a-non þour rome toun is born

How Alla kyng schal come in pilgrymage

By herberiourys þat wentyn here be-forn

ffor which þe senatour as was þe vsage 998

Rod hym a-geyn as was þe vsage

As wel to schewyn his magnificence

As to don any kyng a reuerence 1001

Gret cher doth þis noble senatour

[leaf 208, back]

To kyng alla & he to hym also

Euerych of hem dop oþer gret honour

An[d] that with-in a day or too 1005

This senatour is to kyng Alla go  
 To feste & schortly ȝif I schal not lye  
 Custauncis sone wente in his cumpanye 1008

Summen wolde seyn at þe request of Custaunce  
 This senatour hath lad þis child to feste  
 I ne may not tellyn euery circumstaunce  
 Be as be may þere was he at þe leste 1012  
 But soth is þis þat at his moderys heste  
 By-forn Alla durynge þe metis space  
 This child stod lokyng in þe kyngis face 1015

This Alla kyng hath of þe child gret wondyr  
 And to þe senatour he seyde a-non  
 Whos is þat fayre child þat standis ȝondyr  
 I not *quod* he bi god & bi seynt Iohn 1019  
 A modyr he hath but fadyr hath he non  
 That I of wot & schortly in a stounde  
 He tolde alla how þat þe child was founde 1022

But god wot *quod* this senatour also  
 So vertuous a leuere in myn lyue  
 Ne saw I neuere as sche ne herde of mo  
 Of wordely wemen maydyn nor of wif 1026  
 I dare wel seyn hire hadde leuere a knyf  
 Thurgh-out hyre brest þan ben a woman weke  
 þere is no man coude brynge hire to þe prikke 1029

Now was þis child as lyk on-to custaunce  
 As possible is a creatour to be  
 This alla hath þis face in remembraunce  
 Of dame custaunce & þeron musede he 1033  
 ȝif þat þe childis modyr were ouȝt sche  
 That is his wyf & pryuyly he sighte  
 And sped hym from þe table þat he myȝte 1036

Parfay thouȝte he fantome is in myn hed [leaf 209]

I oghte deme of ryȝtful iugement

That in þe salte se myn wif is ded

And aftyr he made hise argument 1040

What wot I if þat crist hath hire I-sent

Myn wif be se as wel as he hire sente

To myn cuntre from þens þat sche wente 1043

And aftyr non hom with þe senatour

Goth alla for to se þis wondyr chaunce

This senatour doth alla gret honour

And hastilyche he sente aftyr custauce 1047

But trustyȝth wel hire lyste not to daunce

Whan þat sche wiste wherfore was þat sonde

Oneþe vp-on hire feet sche myȝte stonde 1050

Whan Alla saw his wif fayre he hire grette

And wep þat it was routhe for to se

ffor at þe ferste lok he on hyre sette

He knewe wel verayly þat it was sche 1054

And sche for sorwe as dounb stant as a tre

So was hire herte set in distresse

Whan sche remembrede hys vnkyndenesse 1057

Twyes sche swounnyth in hise owene syghit

He wepte & hym excuseth pitously

Now god *quod* he & hise halwis bryȝte

So wisely on myn soule as haue mercy 1061

That of ȝoure harm as gilteles am I

As is Mauryce myn sone so lyk ȝoure face

Ellis þe fend me feche out of þis place 1064

Long was þe sobyng & þe bittere peyne

Er þat hire woful hertis myȝtyn cesse

Gret was þe pyte for to here hem pleyne

Thorgh whiche pleyntis gan hire wo encrease 1068



I prey ȝow of myn labour to relese  
 I may nat telle here wo vn-tyl to morwe  
 I am so wery for to speke of sorwe 1071

But finalli whan þat þe sorwe is wist [leaf 209, back]  
 That Alla giltles was of hire wo  
 I trowe an hunderede tymys ben þey kyst  
 And swich a blysse is þere be-twen hem two 1075  
 That saue þe ioye þat lastyȝt eueremo  
 There is non lyk þat any creature  
 Hath seyn or schal whil þe word wele dure 1078

Tho preyede sche hire housbonde mekely  
 In relef of hire longe pitous peyne  
 That he wolde preye hire fadyr specially  
 That of his maieste he wolde enclyne 1082  
 To vouche-saf sumday with hem to dyne  
 Sche preyede hym ek he schulde be no weye  
 Vn-to hire fadyr no word of hire seye 1085

Summen wolde seyn how þat þe child mauryce  
 Doth þis message vn-to þis emperour  
 But as I gesse alla was not so nyce  
 To hym þat was of so souereyn honour 1089  
 As he þat is of cristene folk þe flour  
 Sente any child but it is bet to deme  
 He wente him selue & so it may wel seme 1092

This emperour hath grauntid gentyly  
 To come to dyner as he hym be-souȝte  
 And wel rede I he lokede besily  
 Vp-on þis child & on his douȝtyr thouȝte 1096  
 Alla goth to hise in and as hym ouȝte  
 Arayed for þis feste in euery wyse  
 As fer forth as hise kunnyng may suffyse 1099

The morwe cam and alla gan hym dresse  
 And ek his wif þis emperour to mete  
 And forth þey rede In ioie & in gladnesse  
 And whan sche saw hire fadyr in þe strete 1103  
 Sche lyȝte a-doun & fallyth hym to feete  
 fadyr *quod* sche ȝoure ȝonge chyld Custaunce  
 Is now ful elene out of ȝoure remembraunce 1106

I am ȝoure douȝty[r] custaunce *quod* sche [leaf 210]  
 That whilhom han sent vn-to surrye  
 It am I fadyr þat in þe salte se  
 Was put a-lone & dampned for to deye 1110  
 Now goode fadyr mercy I ȝow preye  
 Sende me no more vn-to to non hethenesse  
 But thanke myn lord here of his kyndenesse 1113

Who can þe pytous ioie tellyn al  
 By-twexe hem thre syn þey ben þus I-mette  
 But of myn tale makyn an ende I schal  
 The day goth faste I wele no lengere lette 1117  
 These glade folk to dyner þey ben sette  
 In ioie & blysse at dyner I lete hem dwelle  
 A thousent fold more þan I can telle 1120

This child Maurice was sythe emperour  
 Mad bi þe pope & lyuede cristene lyf  
 To Cristis cherche he dede gret honour  
 But I lete alle hise storyis passyn by 1124  
 Of Custaunce is myn tale specially  
 In þe olde romayn storyis may men fynde  
 Maurycis lyf I here it not in mynde 1127

This kyng Alla whan he hise tyme say  
 With his Custaunce his holy wif so swete  
 To ingelond ben þey come þe ryȝte way  
 Where as þey lyue In ioie & in quiete 1131

But lytil while it lastyth I ȝow hete  
 Ioye of þis world for tyme wele not a-byde  
 ffrom day to nyȝt it schaugith as þe tyde 1134

Who lyuede euere in swich delyt a day  
 That sche ne menede outhir concyence  
 Or yre or talent or sunkenys a-fray  
 Enuye or pride or passioun or offence 1138  
 I ne seye but for þis ende this sentence  
 That lytil while in ioye & in plesauce  
 Lastith þe ioye of alla with Custaunce 1141

ffor deth þat takyth of high & low hise rente [leaf 210, back]  
 Whan passede was euene a ȝer as I gesse  
 Out of þe world þis kyng alla he hente  
 ffor whom Custaunce hath ful gret heuinesse 1145  
 Now let vs preyen god his soule blysse  
 And dame Custaunce finally to seye  
 Toward þe toun goth hire weye 1148

To rome is comyn þis holy creature  
 And fyndith hire frendis hole & sounde  
 Now is sche scapid al hire Auenture  
 And whan þat sche hire fadyr hath I-founde 1152  
 Doun on hire kneis fallyth sche to grounde  
 Wepyng for tendirnesse in herte blyþe  
 Sche heriyeth god an hundered thousent sythe 1155

In vertu & holy allemesse dede  
 They lyuyn alle & neuere asundyr wende  
 Thil deth departyth hem þis lyf þey leede  
 And faryth now wel myn tale is at an ende 1159  
 Now Ihesu crist þat of his myȝt may sende  
 Ioye aftyr wo gouerne vs in hise grace  
 And kepe vs alle þat ben in þis place. Amen 1162

**Here endyth the man of lawe hise tale**

[Break of 2 lines, after which is the heading of the Wife of Bath's Prologue.]

## GROUP D. FRAGMENT V.

### § 1. WIFE OF BATH'S PREAMBLE.

#### CAMBRIDGE MS.

[*Sloane MS 1685, leaf 103.*]

#### ¶ The Prologe ¶ Of þ Wyf of Bathe

[*headline*]

**E**xperymēt/ þough none auctoryte  
 Were in þis worlde is riȝt/ ynouȝe for me  
 To speke of woo þat ys in mariage  
 ffor lordynges siþen I twelwe yere was of age 4  
 Thanked by god þat ys eterne on lyue  
 Housbondes atte Chirche dore haue I haȝe fyue  
 Yf I so ofte myȝt haue wedded be  
 But alle were worpi men in her degre 8  
 But me was tolde certayne not longe a-gone ys  
 þat sithen cryste ne went nevere but onys  
 To weddyng in þe Cane of Galile  
 þat be þilke ensample tauȝt he me 12  
 þat I ne shulde wedded be but onys  
 Herke *with* a sharpe worde *with* þe nonys  
 By syde a welle Ihesu god & man  
 Spake in represe of þe Samarytan 16  
 Thou haste y-hade .v. husbondes *quod* he  
 And þat ilke man þat nowe hathe the  
 Ys not þine husbonde þus sayde he certayne  
 What he mente þerby I can not sayne 20  
 Wett but I axe why þe fyfte man  
 Was none housbonde to þe Samarytan  
 And herde telle in myne age 24  
 howe many myȝt she haue in mariage 23

Vpon þis nombre of diffinicion. [Sloane MS 1685]  
Men may deuyne and glose vp and doun  
But wele I wote expresse *with-out* lye  
God bad vs wexe and multiplie 28  
þat gentille text/ can I wele vndirstonde  
Eke wele I wote he sayd myn husbonde  
Schulde let ffadir and modir and take to me  
But of none nombre mencion made he 32  
Of Bygamyne or of Octogamyne  
¶ *Quamobrem relin-*  
¶ *quet homo patrem &*  
¶ *matrem et adherebit*  
¶ *uxori sue Genesis ij<sup>o</sup>.*  
Whi shulde men of hit haue vilonye  
Loke better' þe wyse man kynge Salamon  
I trowe he hade wyues mo þan oñ 36  
Now. wold god hit leffulle were to me [leaf 103, back]  
To be refresshid half so ofte as he  
Whiche yifte of god hade he for alle his wyues  
No man þat hathe suche þat in þis world ys 40  
God wote þis noble kynge as to my witte  
The fyrst nyzt/ hade many a mery fyte  
With Iche of hem so wele was he a lyue  
Blissed be god þat I haue weddid fyue 44  
Welle come þe sixte whan þat euere he shalle  
ffor siche I wille nouzt kepe chaste in alle  
What myne husbonde ys fro þe worlde gone  
Some crysten man shalle wedde me a-none 48  
ffor þan þe Appostell seithe þat I am fre  
To wedde a goddes half where hit likes me  
he seyth þat to be weddid ys no synne  
Bettere ys to be wedded þan to brenne  
¶ *Melius est nubere*  
¶ *quam vri*  
What recketh me pouze folke say vilonye 53  
Of shrewed lameche and his Bygamyne  
I wote wele Abraham was an holy man  
And Iacob eke as fer as I euere can 56  
And eche of [hem] hade wyues mo þan two  
And many an othere man also  
Where can ye say in eny manere age  
þat vs god deffendid mariage 60



By expresse worde I prey you telle me [Sloane MS 1695]  
 Or where comaundid he virgynyte  
 I wote as wele as 3e hit ys no drede  
 The ApostiH whan þat he speketh of Maydenhede 64  
 he sayd precept þer-of hade he none  
 Men May consayle a woman to ben one  
 But consaylynge ys none comaundement  
 He putte hit in oure owen Iugement 68  
 ffor hade god commaunded Maydenhede  
 þan hade he dampned weddynge with þe dede  
 And certes yf þere were no sede y-sowe  
 Virgynyte þan where-of shuld hit growe 72  
 Poule durste not comaunden atte leste [leaf 104]  
 A thyng of whiche his Mayster yaf hym none heste  
 þe dart ys set vpe for Virgynite 75  
 Chase who so may who so renneth best let see] [Sloane extract ends]  
 But þis word is not take of euery wyght [MS Gg. 4. 27, leaf 212]  
 But þere as god lust 3eue it of hise myzt  
 I wot wel þat thapostele was a mayde  
 But natheles thogh þat he wrot & sayde 80  
 He wolde þat euery were swych as he  
 Al nys but cunseyl to virginite  
 And for to been a wyf he 3af me leue  
 Of indulgence so is it no repreue 84  
 To wedde me 3if myn make deye  
 With-oute excepcioun of bygamyne  
 Al were it good no woman for to touche  
 He mente as in his bed as in hyse couche 88  
 ffor peril is fer & tow thasemble  
 3e knowe what þis exsaumple may recemle  
 This is al & sum þat virgynyte  
 More profitith þan weddyng in frelete 92  
 ffrelete clepe I 3if þat he & sche  
 Wolde leede al here lyf in chastite  
 I graunte it wel I haue non enuye  
 Thow maydynhed profere bigamyne 96

Hem lykith to be clene body & gost  
 Of myn estat I nyl not make no bost  
 ffor wel 3e wete a lord in hyse houshold  
 He hath nat euery vessel al of gold 100  
 Some ben of tre & don here lord seruyse  
 God clepith folk to hym in sundery wyse  
 And eueryche hath of god a propere 3ifte  
 Summe þis some þat as hym lestyth schyfte 104  
 Virginite <sup>1</sup>is gret perfeccoun<sup>1</sup> [1—<sup>1</sup> later]  
 And contynens ek with reson  
 But crist þat of perfeccioun is welle  
 Bad nat euery wy3t schulde selle 108  
 Al þat he hadde & 3eue it to þe pore  
 And in swich wise folwe hym and hese foore  
 He spak to hem þat wolde leue perfytly  
 And lordyngys by 3oure leue þat am nat I 112  
 I wele be-stowe þe flour of al myn age  
 In the artys & in þe freut of maryage  
 Telle me also to what conclusyoun [leaf 212, back]  
 Were membris made of generacioun 116  
 And for what profyt was a wyf I-wrou3t  
 Trostyth ry3t wel þey were nat mad for nou3t  
 Glose ho so wele I seye vp & down  
 That þey were makyd for purgacyoun 120  
 Of vryne bope & thyngis smale  
 And ek to knowe a femel from a male  
 And for non oper cause sey 3e no  
 The experience wit wel it is nat so 124  
 So þat 3e clerkis ben nat with me wrothe  
 I seye þis þat þey ben makede for bope  
 That is to seye for offyse & for ese  
 Of engendereure þere we not god displese 128  
 Whi schuldyn men ellys in here bokis sette  
 That a man schal 3ilde to his wif hire dette  
 Now wherewith schulde he make hyse payement  
 If he ne vsede his instrument 132

Thanne were þey made vp-on a creature  
 To purge vryne & for engendereure  
 But I sey not þat euery wyȝt is holde  
 That hath swich harneys as I of tolde 136  
 To gon & vse hem in engenderure  
 They schul nat take of chastite no cure  
 Cryst was a maydyn & schapyn as a man  
 And manye a seynt sithe þe world be-gan 140  
 ȝit leuede þey euere in parfyt chastite  
 I nyl not enuye swych virginite  
 Let hem be bred of pure whete seed  
 And lat vs wyuys hote barli breed 144  
 And ȝit with barli bred mark telle can  
 That oure lord refroschid manye a man  
 In swich estat as god clepith vs  
 I wele perseuere I am nat precious 148  
 In wyf-hod I wele vse myn instrument  
 As frely as myn makere hath it sent  
 ȝif I be dangerous god gif me sorwe  
 Myn housbonde schal it haue on eue & morwe 152  
 Whan þat hym lyste come forth & paye hise dette [leaf 211r]  
 An housbonde wele I haue I nyl nat lette  
 Whiche schal be boþe myn detour & myn thral  
 And haue hise trybulacioun with-al 156  
 Vp-on hise flesch whil I am his wyf  
 I haue þe power durynge al myn lyf  
 Vp-on hyse proper body & noght he  
 Ryght þus thapostele tolde it me 160  
 And bad oure housbondys forto loue vs wel  
 Al þis sentence me likyth euerydel  
 Vp sterte þe pardouner & þat a-non  
 Now dame quod he bi god & by seyn Iohn 164  
 ȝe ben a noble prechour in þis cas  
 I was a-bute to wedde a wyf allas  
 What schulde I it beye on myn flesch so dere  
 ȝit hadde I leuere wedde no wif to ȝere 168

A-byde *quod* sche myn tale is nat be-gunne  
 Nay þou schat drynkyn of a-noþer tunne  
 Or þan I go schal sauoure werse þan ale  
 And whan þat I haue told forth myn tale 172  
 Of trybulacioun þat is in maryage  
 Of which I am expert in al myn age  
 This is to seyn myn self hath ben þe wippe  
 Thanne mayzt þou chese wheþer þou wolt skyppe 176  
 Of þat tunne þat I schal a-broche  
 Be war of it er þou to nygh a-proche  
 ffor I schal telle ensample mo þan ten  
 Who so þat wele nat be war by opere men 180  
 By hym schul opere men corectid be  
 The same wordys wrytþit protholome  
 Rede it in hise almagestis & take it þere  
 Dame I wolde preye ȝif ȝoue wil it were 184  
 seyde þis pardounner as ȝe be-gan  
 Tellyth forth ȝoure tale sparyth nan  
 And tellith vs ȝynge men of ȝoure praptik  
 Gladly sire sithe it may ȝow lyk 188  
 But ȝit I preye to al þis cumpaynye  
 If þat I speke after myn fantasye  
 As takyth nat a gres þat I seye [leaf 213, back] 192  
 ffor myn entent is but for to pleye  
 Now sere now wele I telle forth myn tale  
 As euere mote I drynkyn wyn or ale  
 I schal sey soth of housbondis þat I hadde  
 As thre of hem were goode & thre were badde 196  
 The thre men were goode & ryche & olde  
 Oneþe myzt þey þe statut holde  
 In which þat þey were boundyn on to me  
 ȝe wete wel what I mene of þis parde 200  
 As helpe me god I laughe whan I thynke  
 How pytously on nyzt I made hem to swynke  
 But be myn fey I tolde of it no stor  
 They haddyn me ȝeuyñ hire lond & hire tresor 204



Me nedede not do lengere diligence  
 To wyne hire loue & don hire reuerence  
 They louede me so wel by god a-boue  
 That I ne told no deynte of here loue 208  
 As wys woman wele sette hire euere in on  
 To gete hire loue þere as sche hath non  
 But sythe I haue hem holy in myn hond  
 And sithe þey han me zeuyn al here lond 212  
 What schulde I take hed hem for to plesse  
 But ȝif it were for myn profyt & myn ese  
 I sette hem so a-werke be myn fey  
 That manye a nyȝt þey sunge weyleaway 216  
 The bakon was nat fet for hem I trowe  
 That some men han in exces at dunmowe  
 I gouernede hem so wel aftyr my lawe  
 That eche of hem was blysfyl & ful fawe 220  
 To brynge me gay þyng from þe feyre  
 They were ful glad whan I spak tyl hem fayre  
 ffor god it wot I schid hem spitously  
 Now herkenyth how I bar me properly 224  
 ȝe wise wyuys þat kunne vndyr-stonde  
 Thus schul ȝe speke & bere hem wrong on honde  
 ffor half so boldely can þere no man  
 Swere & lye as can a woman 228  
 I seye it nat be wyuys þat been wyse [leaf 214]  
 But ȝif it be whan þey hym mysavise  
 A wis wif ȝif þat sche can hire good  
 Schal bere hym on hande þe cou is wod 232  
 And take witesse of hire owene mayde  
 Of hire asent but herkenyth how I seyde  
 Syre olde caynard is þis þyn aray  
 Whi is myn neyheborys wif so gay 236  
 Sche is honourede euere al þere sche goth  
 I sitte at hom & haue no thryfty cloth  
 What dost þou at myn neyhebouris hous  
 Is sche so fayr & þow so ameraus 240



What rounne 3e with oure maydenys benedicite  
 Sire olde lechour lat 3oure iapis be  
 And 3if I haue a gossib or a frend  
 With-outyn gilt þou chidist as a fend 244  
 3if þat I walke or pleye vn-tyl hise hous  
 þou comyst hom as dronkyn as a mous  
 And prechist on þyn bench with euele pref  
 þou seyst to me it is a gret myschef 248  
 To wedde a poore woman for costage  
 And 3if sche be ryche & of hey parage  
 þanne seyst þou it is a turmetye  
 To suffere hire pryde & malencolye 252  
 And 3if þat sche be fayr þou veray knaue  
 þou seyst þat euery holour wele hire haue  
 Sche may no while in chastite on byde  
 That is a-sayled on eche a-syde 256  
 þou seyst þat some folk desyryn vs for rychesse  
 Summe for oure schap some for oure fayrenesse  
 And some for sche can synge & daunce  
 And some for gentillesse & some for dalyaunce 260  
 Some for hire handis & for hire armys smale  
 Thus goth al to þe deuyl be þyn tale  
 Thow seyst men may nat kepe a castel wal  
 It may so longe asaylede ben oueral 264  
 And 3if þat sche be foul þou seyst þat sche  
 Coueytith euery man þat sche may se  
 ffor as a spaynel sche wil on hym lepe [leaf 214, back]  
 Til þat sche fynde sum man hire to schepe 268  
 Ne non so grey gos þat goth in þe lake  
 As þou seyst wele be with-oute a make  
 And seyst it is an hard þyng for to welde  
 A thyng þat no man wele hise thankis helde 272  
 Thow seyst horel whan þou gost to bedde  
 How þat no wys man nedyth for to wedde  
 Ne no man þat tendyth on-to heuene  
 With wylde thundyr dynt in fery leuene 276

Mote þyn wekede neke be to-broke  
 þou seyst þat droppynge housis & ek smoke  
 And chydyng wyf makyth men to fle  
 Out of here owene hous a benedicite 280  
 What eylyth swich an old man to chyde  
 þou seyst þat we wyuis wele oure vicis hyde  
 Til we ben fast & þanne we wele hem schewe  
 Wel may þat ben a prouerbe of a schrewe 284  
 þou seyst þat oxsyn Assis hors & houndys  
 þey ben a-sayed at dyuerse stoundys  
 Basenys lauourys er þan men hem beye  
 sponys & stolis & alle swich husbondrye 288  
 And also cloþis pottys & a-ray  
 But folk of wyuys makyn non a-say  
 Til þey ben weddit olde dotard schrewe  
 Thanne seyst þou we wele oure vicis schewe 292  
 Thou seyst also þat it displeseþ me  
 But ȝif þat þou wilt preyse myn beute  
 And but þou poure alwey in myn face  
 And clepe me fayre dame in euery place 296  
 And but þou make a feste on þat day  
 þat I was born & make me frosch & gay  
 And but þou do to myn noryce honour  
 And to myn chaumberere *with-inne* myn bour 300  
 And to mynne faderys folkys & mynne alyes  
 Thus seyst þou olde barel ful of lȳis  
 And ȝit of oure apprentys Iankyn  
 ffor his scrip here schynyng as gold fyn 304  
 And for he squyeryth me vp & doun [leaf 215]  
 ȝit hast þou cauȝt fals suspeciou  
 I nyl hym not þow [þou] were ded to morwe  
 But telle me whi hydistow *with* sorwe 308  
 The keyes of myn cheste al day from me  
 It is myn good as wel as þyn parde  
 What wenyst þou to make an ydiot of oure dame  
 Now by þat lord þat callede is seynt Iame 312

Thow schat not boþe þow þou were wood  
 Ben maystyr of myn body & ek of myn good  
 That on þou schat for-gon maugery þyn Iyen  
 What helpith it of me te enquere or spyen 316  
 I trowe þou woldist louke me in þyn cheste  
 Thow schuldist sey wyf go where þe leste  
 Take þoure disport I nyl leue no talys  
 I knowe þow for a trewe wif dame alis 320  
 We loue no man þat take kep or charge  
 Where þat we gon we wele ben at oure large  
 Of alle men blyssede mote he bee  
 The wyse Astrolages dann Protholomee 324  
 That say þis prouerbe in his almageste  
 Of alle men his wisdom is þe heyeste  
 That rekyth neuere ho hath þe world in honde  
 By þis prouerbe þou schat vndyrstonde 328  
 Haue þou I-now what thar þe reche or care  
 How meryly þat opere folkys fare  
 ffor serteyn olde dotard by þoure leue  
 þe schal haue queynte ryzt I-now at eue 332  
 He is a gret nygard þat wolde werne  
 A man to lyzte a candeale at his lanterne  
 He schal haue neuere þe lesse lyzt parde  
 Haue þou I-now þe thar not pleyne þe 336  
 þou seyst also þat ȝif we make vs gay  
 With cloþynge & with precious aray  
 That it is pyl of oure chastyte  
 And ȝit with sorwe þou muste enforse þe \* 340  
 And seye þese wordis in þe apostelys name  
 In abite mad with chastite & schame  
 þe women schul aparayle þow quod he [leaf 215, back]  
 And not in trussede her & gay parre 344  
 As pereles ne with gold ne with cloþis ryche  
 Aftyr þyn tix ne aftyr rubryche  
 I wol not werke as meche as a gnat  
 þou seydist þis þat I was lyk a cat 348

ffor who so wolde senge a cattis skyn  
 Thanne wolde þe cat dwelle in his In  
 And ȝif þe cattis skyn be slyk & gay  
 Sche wil not dwelle in house half a day 352  
 But forth sche wele er any day be dawyd  
 To schewe hire skyn & gon a catirwawid  
 This is to seye ȝif I be gay sere schrewe  
 I wele renne a-boute myn borel to schewe 356  
 Sire olde fol what eylyth þe to asprien  
 Thow þou preye argus with hise C eyen  
 To be myn warde cors as he can best  
 In feyth he schal nat kepe me but me lest 360  
 ȝit I coude make his berd so mote I the  
 þou seydist ek þat þere ben thyngis thre  
 Theche thyngis trobelyn al þis erþe  
 And þat no whit may endure þe ferþe 364  
 O leue sire schrewe Ihesu schorte þyn lyf  
 ȝit prechist þou & seyst þat an hateful wyf  
 I-rekenede is for on of þese myschauncis  
 Ben þere non opere of þese recemblauncis 368  
 That ȝe may likene ȝoure parabele to  
 But ȝif a sely wif be on of þo  
 þou likkenyst womany's loue to helle  
 To barayne lond þere no watyr may dwelle 372  
 þou likenyst it also to wildefer  
 The more it brennyth þe more it hath desyr  
 To consumme euery þynk þat brent wele be  
 Thow seyst ryȝt as wermys consume a tre 376  
 Ryȝt so a wif distroyeþ hire husbonde  
 That knowyn þey þat ben to wyuys bonde  
 Lordyngis ryȝt þus as ȝe han vndyrstonde  
 Bar I stifly myn olde housbonde on honde 380  
 That þus þey seydyn in here dronkenes  
 And al was fals but þat I tok witnes  
 On Iankyn & on myn nece also  
 O lord þe peyne I dede hem & þe wo 384

(leaf 216)



fful gilteles by godys swete pyne  
 ffor as an hors coude bite & whine  
 I coude pleyne & 3it was in þe gilt  
 Or ellis I hadde ofte tymys ben spilt 388  
 Who so come fyrst to melle fyrst grynt  
 I pleynede fyrst so was oure werre stent  
 They were ful glad to excuse hem blyue  
 Of thyng þey neuere a-gilt in al here lyue 392  
 And of wenchis wolde I bere hem on honde  
 Whan þat for sek oneþe myzte stonde  
 3it tekelede I his herte for þat he  
 Wende þat I hadde had of hym gret chirte 396  
 I sey þat al myn walkynge out be nyzte  
 Is for to espien wenchis þat he dyzte  
 Vndyr þat colour hadde I manye a murthe  
 ffor al swych wit is 3euyn vs in oure burthe 400  
 Deseyt wepynd spynnyng god hath 3eue  
 To wemen kyndely whan þat þey may lyue  
 And þus of on thyng I a-waunte me  
 At þe ende I hadde þe betere in eche degre 404  
 Be sleyghe or forse or sum manere thyng  
 As by continuel murmure & grochyng  
 Nameli on bedde hadde þey myschaunce  
 There wolde I chide & don hem non plesaunce 408  
 I wolde no lengere in þe bed a-byde  
 3if þat I felte his arm ouyr myn syde  
 Til he hadde mad his raunsum on to me  
 Thanne wolde I suffere hym to don hise nysete 412  
 And þerfore euery man hise tale telle  
 Wyn ho so may for al is for to selle  
 With emty hond men may none haukys lure  
 ffor wynnyng wolde I al hise lust endure 416  
 And make me a feynede apetit  
 And 3it in bacoun hadde I neuere delit  
 þat made me euere þat I wolde hym chyde  
 ffor þow þe pope hadde sete by hyse syde 420

[leaf 216, back]



I nolde hym spare at hise owene boord  
 ffor by myn trouthe I quitte hym word for word  
 As help me veray god omnypotent  
 Thow I schulde make now myn testement 424  
 I ne owe hem nat a word þat it nys quit  
 I brouȝte it so a-boute by myn wit  
 That þey muste ȝeue it vp as for þe beste  
 Or ellis hade we neuere ben in reste 428  
 ffor þow he lokede as a wood lyoun  
 ȝit he schulde fayle of hise conclusioun  
 Thanne wolde I seye goode loue take kep  
 How mekely lokyth wilkyn oure schep 432  
 Come neer myn spouse lat me ba þyn scheke  
 ȝe schul be al pacient & meke  
 And haue a swete spicede concience  
 Sithin ȝe preche so of Iobes pacience 436  
 Sufferith alwey sithe ȝe so wel can preche  
 And but ȝe don certeyn we schul ȝow teche  
 That it is fayr to haue a wyf in pes  
 On of vs to muste bouwe douteles 440  
 And seyth a man is more resonable  
 þan woman is ȝe muste be sufferable  
 What eylyth ȝow thus to groche & grone  
 Is it for ȝe wolde han myn queynte alone 444  
 Whi take it al lo haue it euerydel  
 Petyr I-schrewe ȝow but ȝe loue it wel  
 ffor ȝif I wolde selle myn belechose  
 I coude walke as frosch as ony rose 448  
 But I wele kepe it for ȝoure owene toth  
 ȝe ben to blame by god I seye ȝow soth  
 Sweche manere of wordis hadde we on honde  
 Now wele I speke of myn fourte housbonde 452  
 Myn fourte housbonde was a reuelour  
 This is to seyne he hadde a paramour  
 And I was ȝong & ful of ragerye  
 Styborne & strong and Ioly as a pye 456

Wel coude I daunce to an harpe smale [leaf 217]  
 And synge I-wis as ony nyghtyngale  
 Whan I hadde dronke a drauȝt of swete wyn  
 Metullius þe foule clerk þe swyn 460  
 That with a staf be-rafte his wif hire lyf  
 ffor sche drank wyn & I hadde been his wif  
 He schulde nat a dauntid me from drynk  
 And aftyr wyn on venus muste I thynk 464  
 ffor al so sykkyr as cold engenderyth hayl  
 A lycorous mouth muste han a licorous tayl  
 In woman vinolent is no defence  
 This knowyn lechourys bi experyence 468  
 But lord cryst whan it remembryth me  
 Vp-on myn thout & on myn iolyte  
 It tykelith me a-boute myn herte rote  
 Vnto þis day it doth myn herte bote 472  
 That I haue had myn world as In myn tyme  
 But age allas þat al wole vndyrmyne  
 Hath me be-reft myn beute & myn pith  
 Let go farewel þe deuyl go þerwith 476  
 The flour is gon þere is no more to telle  
 The bren as I best can now muste I selle  
 But ȝit to ben merye wele I euere fonde  
 Now wele I telle of myn fourte husbonde 480  
 I seye I hadde in herte gret dispit  
 That he of ony oþer hadde delyt  
 But he was quit by god & be seynt Iocce  
 I made hym of þe same wode a croce 484  
 Nat of myn body in no foul maner  
 But serteynly I made folk swich cher  
 That in hise owene grese I made hym frye  
 ffor pure angir & for Ielouye 488  
 Bi god in erþe he was in purgatorie  
 ffor whiche I hope his soule be in glorie  
 ffor god it wot he sat ful ofte & song  
 Whan þat his schon ful bittyrly him wrong 492

There was no wyȝt but god & he þat wiste  
 In manye wise how sore I hym twyste  
 He deyede whan I cam from Ierusalem [leaf 217, back]  
 And lith I-graue vnder þe rode bem 496  
 Al Is his tounbe not so coryous  
 As was þe sepulcre of hym daryus  
 Whiche þat Arpelles wrouȝte so subtily  
 It is but wast to burye hem so precyously 500  
 Lat hym fare wel god ȝeue his soule reste  
 He is now in hise graue & in his cheste  
 Now of myn fifte husbonde wele I telle  
 God lete his soule neuere come in helle 504  
 And ȝit was he to me þe moste schrewe  
 That fele I on mynne rebis alle be-wrewo  
 And euere schal vn-to myn endyng day  
 But in oure bed he was so frosch & gay 508  
 And þerwithal wel coude he me glose  
 Whan þat he wolde haue myn belechose  
 That þow he hadde me betyn on euery bon  
 He coude wynne myn loue a-ȝen a-non 512  
 I trowe I louede hym beste for þat he  
 Was of his loue dangerous to me  
 We women haue ȝif I schal nat lye  
 In þis matyre a queynte fantasye 516  
 That what þyng we may nat lyȝtely haue  
 þerafȝter wele most crye & craue  
 fforbede vs thyng þat desyre we  
 Presse on vs faste & þanne wele we fle 520  
 With daunger oute we oure chaffare  
 Gret pres in market makyth dere ware  
 And to good chep is holde of lytyl prys  
 This knowyth euery woman þat is wys 524  
 Myn fyfte husbonde god his soule blysse  
 Whiche þat I tok for loue & no rychesse  
 He sumtyme was a clerk of oxsene forde  
 And hadde left skole & wente at hom to borde 528

With myn gossib dwellynge in oure toun  
 God haue hire soule hire name was alysoun  
 Sche knew myn herte & ek myn pryuite  
 Bet þan oure paryche prest so mote I the 532  
 To hire be-wreyede I myn conseyll al [leaf 218]  
 ffor hadde myn husebonde pissede on a wal  
 Or don ony thyng þat schulde a cost his lyf  
 To hire & to a-noþer worthi wyf 536  
 And to myn nece þat I louede wel  
 I wolde haue tolde hise conseyll euerydel  
 And so I dede ful ofte god it wot  
 That made hise face ofte red & hot 540  
 ffor verray schame & blamede hym self þat he  
 Hadde told me so gret a pryuyte  
 And so be-fel þat onys in a lente  
 So ofte tyme I to myn gossib wente 544  
 ffor euere þat I louede to be gay  
 And for to walke in marsch auerylle & may  
 ffrom hous to hous to heryn sundery talis 547  
 That Iankyn <sup>1</sup>clerk & myn gossib dame Alis [1 c rubbed out]  
 And I myn self vp to þe feldis wente  
 Myn housbonde was at lundene al þat lente  
 And I hadde þe betere leyser for to pleye  
 And for to se & ek for to be seye 552  
 Of lusty folk what wyste I where myn grace  
 Whas schape for to be or in what place  
 Therefore I made mynne visitaciounnys  
 To vigilis & to procesciounnys 556  
 To prechyngis ek & to pylgrymagis  
 To pleyes of myrakelis & of mariagis  
 And werede vp-on myne scarlet gites  
 These wormes these mothis & these mytis 560  
 Vp-on myn peryl frete hem neuere a del  
 And wost þou why for they were vsede wel  
 Nowe wele I telle forth what happede me  
 I seye þat in the feldys walkede we 564



Tyl trewely we haddyn swich a dalyaunce  
 This clerk & I þat of myn puruyaunce  
 I spak to hym & seyde how þat he  
 ȝif I were wedewe he schulde wedde me 568  
 ffor serteynly I seye for no bobaunce  
 ȝit was I neuere *with-out*e puruyaunce  
 Of mariage & more thyngis eek [leaf 218, back]  
 I holde a mousys herte not worth a leek 572  
 That hath but on hole to sterte to  
 And that fayle thanne is al I-do  
 I bere hym on honde he enchauntede me  
 Myn dame taughte me þat sotylete 576  
 And ek I seyde I mette of hym al nyȝt  
 He wolde a slayn me as I lay vp ryȝt  
 And al myn bed was ful of veray blood  
 But ȝit I hope þat he schal do me good 580  
 ffor blood be-tokenyth gold as me was tauȝt  
 And al was fals I dremede of it ryght nauȝt  
 But I folwede ay myn damys lore  
 As wel of this as of opere thyngis more 584  
 But now syre lat se what schal I seyn  
 A-ha by god I haue myn tale a-geyn  
 What that myn husbonde was on bere  
 I weep & made a sory chere 588  
 As wyuys motyn for it is vsage  
 And with myn couerechef couerede myn visage  
 But for þat I was purueyed of a make  
 I wepte but smal & þat I vndyr-take 592  
 To cherche was myn husbond o born on morwe  
 With negheboris þat for hym madyn sorwe  
 And Iankyn oure klerk was on of thoo  
 As help me god whan that I saw hym goo 596  
 Aftyr þe beere me thoughte he hadde a payre  
 Of leggis & feet so clene & fayre  
 That al myn herte I ȝaf vnto his hold  
 He was I trowe twenty wyntyre old 600



And I was fourty ȝif I schal sey sooth  
 And ȝit I hadde alway a coltys toth  
 Gat-tothid I was & that be-cam me wel  
 I hadde the prente of seynt peterys sel 604  
 As help me god I was a lusty on  
 ffayr & ryche & frosch & wel be-gon  
 And trewely as myn husbondys toldyn me  
 I hadde the beste *quoniam* that myȝte be 608  
 ffor sertis I am al venerient [leaf 219]  
 In felynge & myn herte is marcient  
 Venus me ȝaf myn lust myn licorousnesse  
 And mars ȝaf me myn hardy-nesse 612  
 Myn ascendent was taur & mars ther Inne  
 Allas allas that euere loue was syzne  
 I folwede ay myn Inclynacyoun  
 By vertu of myn constolacioun 616  
 That made me that I coude nat withdrawe  
 Myn chambere of venus from a good felawe  
 ȝit haue I Martes mark vp-on myn face  
 And also in a-nothyr preue place 620  
 ffor god so wis be myn sauacyoun  
 I ne lewede neuere by non discrecyoun  
 But euere folwede myn apetit  
 Al were he schort or long or blak or whȝt 624  
 I tok no kep so þat he lykede mee  
 How pore ne ek o what degree  
 What schal I sey but at þe monethis ende  
 This Ioly clerk Iankyn that was so hynde 628  
 Hath wedede me with gret solempnetee  
 And to hym ȝaf I al that lond & fee  
 That euere was me ȝeuyn þere by-foore  
 But aftyrward me repentede sone therfore 632  
 He nolde suffere no thyng of myn lyst  
 But onys he smot me with hyse fyst  
 ffor I rente onys out of hyse bok a lef  
 That for the strok myn ere wex al def 636

Styborne I was as a leonesse

And of myn tunge a veray Iangeleresse

And walke I wolde as [I] hadde don by-forn

ffrom hous to hous al-thow he hadde it sworn 640

ffor whiche ofte tymys he wolde preche

And me olde romayn geestys teche

How he symplycious Gallus lafte his wyf

And hire for sok for terme of al his lyf 644

Not but for o poynt he hyre say

Lokynge out of hyse dore vp-on a day

Anothir Romayn tolde he by name [leaf 219, back]

That for hise wif was at a somer game 648

With-outyn hyse wetynge he for-sok hire eke

And thanne wolde he vp-on hise bible seeke

That ilke prouerbe of ecclesiaste

Where he comaundyth & forbedyth faste 652

Men schal not suffere here wyvis to roule a-boute

Thanne wolde he seye thus with-outyn doute

Who-so byldyth hise hous al of salwys

And prikyth hyse blynde hors ouere þe falewis 656

And sufferith his wyf go sekyn halwys

Is worthi to been hangyn on the galwis

But al for nouzt I sette nat an hawe

Of hise prouerbis ne of hise olde sawe 660

Ne I nulde of hym corectede be

I hate hym that mynne vicis tellyn me

And so don mo god wot than I

This made hym holde me wood al outerely 664

I nolde forbere hym in no manere cas

Now wele I sey ȝow soth by seynt Thomays

Whi that I rente out of hise bok a lef

ffor whyche he smot me that I was def 668

He hadde a bok that gladly nyzt & day

ffor his disport he wolde rede alway

He clepede it valerye & theofraste

At which bok he low ful faste 672

And ek he seyde that sumtyme there was a clerk at rome  
 A cardenale that hyȝt Ierome  
 That made a bok a-ȝen Iouynian  
 In whiche bok þere was ek Tertulan 676  
 Crisippus Tortula & Helowys  
 That was abbesse not fer from Parys  
 And ek the parabele of Salamon  
 Ouydis art & bokys many on 680  
 And alle these were boundyn In on volome  
 And euery day & nyȝt was hyse custome  
 Whan he hadde leyse[r] & vacacyoun  
 ffrom opere wordely ocupacyoun 684  
 To redyn on hise bok of wekede wyuys [leaf 220]  
 He knew of hem mo legendys & lyuys  
 Than ben of goode wyuys in the byble  
 ffor trostyth wel it is an Impossible 688  
 That any clerk schulde speke good of wyuys  
 But ȝif it be of holye seyntis lyuys  
 Ne of non othere woman neuere þe mo  
 Who peyntede þe lyoun tel me who 692  
 Bi god ȝif women haddyn wretyn storyis  
 As clerkis han with inne here oratoryis  
 They wolde a wrete of men more wekedenesse  
 Than al þe Mark of adam may redresse 696  
 The chylderyn of mercurye & of venus  
 Ben in hyre werkys wol contraryous  
 Mercurye louth wysdom & science  
 And venus louth riot & dispence 700  
 And for hire dyuerse dispocicioun  
 Eche fallyth in operis exsaltacyoun  
 And þus wot god Mercurye is desolat  
 In Pisses where Mercurye is exaltat 704  
 And venus fallyth where Mercurye is reysed  
 Therfore no woman of no klerk is preysed  
 The clerk whan he is old & may not do  
 Of venus werkys worth hyse olde scho 708

Thanne sit he doun & wryt in hise dotage  
 That wemen kunne not kepe here maryage  
 But now to purpos why I tolde the  
 That I was betyn for a bok pardee 712  
 Vp-on a nyȝt Iankyn that was oure syre  
 Radde on his bok as he sat by the fyre  
 Of Eua fyrst that for hyre wikkedenes  
 Was al mankynde brouȝt to wrechedenes 716  
 [For whiche þat Ihesu Crist hym selfe was slayne [MS Reg. 17 D  
xv, lf 134, bk.]  
 That boughȝte vs with his herte blode agayne [Not in Sloane MS  
1685, lf 111, bk; Harl.  
7335, lf 70, bk; or Reg.  
18 C 2, leaf 113, bk.]  
 Lo here expresse of women Maye ye fflynde  
 That women was the losse of AH Mankynde] 720  
 Tho radde he me how sampson loste hyse heris  
 Slepynge his leman kitte hem with hyre scherys  
 Thorgh whych tresoun loste he bothe hyse eyen  
 Tho radde he me ȝif I schal nat lyen 724  
 Of ercules & of hyse dyanyre  
 That causede hym to sette hym selue a fyre  
 No thyng for-gat he the care & the wo [leaf 220, back]  
 That socrates hadde with hyse wyuys two 728  
 How Exantippa caste pis vp-on his hed  
 This sely man sat styлле as he were deed  
 He wypede his hed no more durste he seyn  
 But er thundyr stynte þere comyth a reyn 732  
 Of phasippa that was the queen of Crete  
 ffor schrewedenesse hym thouȝte the tale swete  
 ffy spek na more it is a gresely thyng  
 Of hire horrible lust & hire lykyng 736  
 Of clitemysta for hire lecherye  
 That falsely maade hire husbonde for to deye  
 He radde it with ful good deuocioun  
 He tolde me ek for what occasyoun 740  
 Amphiorax at thebes loste his lyf  
 Myn husbonde hadde a legende of his wyf  
 Eryphilem þat for an Ouche of gold  
 Hath priuily on to þe grekys told 744



Where þat hyre husbonde hidde hym in a place  
 ffor whiche he hadde at thebes sory grace  
 Of lyma tolde he me & of lueye  
 Th[e]y bothe made here housbondis for to dye 748  
 That on for loue that oþer for hate  
 Lyma hire housbonde on an euyne late  
 Enpoysounede hath for þat sche was his fo  
 Lucyia lykerous louede hyre housbonde so 752  
 That he schulde alwey on hire thynke  
 Sche ȝaf hym swich a manere loue drynke  
 That he was ded er it was by þ<sup>e</sup> morwe  
 And þus alगतys housbondis haddyn sorwe 756  
 Thanne tolde he me how on latymys  
 Compleynede to his felawe Arrys  
 That in hyse gardyn growede swych a tre  
 On whiche he seyde þat his wyuys thre 760  
 Hangede hem self for herte despitous  
 O leue brothir *quod* this Arrys  
 ȝif me a plante of that blyssede tre  
 And in myn gardyn schal it plauntede be 764  
 Of lattere date of wyuys þanne he radde [leaf 221]  
 That some han slayn here housbondis in here bedde  
 And leet hire lectour dyȝte hire al þe nyȝt  
 Whils þat þe cors lay in þe flor vp-ryȝt 768  
 And some han dryue a nayl in here brayn  
 Whils þat þey slepte & þus þey han hem slayn  
 Some han ȝeue hem poysoun in here drynk  
 He spak more harm than herte may be-thynk 772  
 And þer-with-al he knew mo prouerbis  
 Than in this world þere growe gres or erbis  
 Bet is *quod* he þat thyn habitacioun  
 Be with a lyoun or a foul dragoun 776  
 Than with a waman vsynge for to chyde  
 Betere is *quod* he hye in þe rof a-byde  
 Than with a wekede woman doun in an hous  
 They ben so wekke & so contraryous 780



They hatyn that here housbondys louyn ay  
 He seyde a woman caste hire schame a-way  
 Whan sche caste of hire smok & ferþere mo  
 A fayr woman but sche be chast also 784  
 Is lik a golde ryng in a sowis nose  
 Ho wolde wene or ho wolde suppose  
 The wo that in myn herte was & pyne  
 And I saw þat he wolde neuere fyne 788  
 But redyn on hise cursede bok al nyȝt  
 Al sodeynly thre leuys haue I plyȝt  
 Out of his bok as he sat ful meke  
 And with myn fist so tok I hym on þe cheke 792  
 That in oure fyre he fyl bakward a-doun  
 And he vp stirte as doth a wood lyoun  
 And with his fyst he smbt me on the hed  
 That In the flor I lay as I were ded 796  
 And whan he saw how styлле I lay  
 He was a-gast & fledde a-way  
 Til at þe laste out of myn swow I breyde  
 O hast þou sleyn me thef I seyde 800  
 And þus for myn lond wilt þou mordere me  
 Er I be ded ȝit wele I kyasse the  
 And ner he cam & knelede fayre a-doun [leaf 221, back]  
 And seyde myn dere sistyr alysoun 804  
 Als helpe me god I schal þe neuere smyte  
 That I haue don It is thyn self to wyte  
 ffor ȝeue it me & þat I þe be-seke  
 And ȝit eft-sonys I hitte hym on the cleke 808  
 And seyde thef þus meche I may me wreke  
 Now wele I deye I may no lengere speke  
 But at þe laste with meche care & wo  
 We fille a-cordit by oure seluyn two 812  
 He ȝaf me al þe brydyl in myn hond  
 To haue gouernauns of hous & lond  
 And of his tunge & of his hond also  
 And made hym to brenne his bok ryȝt þo 816

And whanne I hadde I-getyn on to me  
 By maysterye al þe souereyntee  
 Thanne he seyde myn owene trewe wyf  
 Do as ȝe leste for terme of al ȝoure lyf 820  
 Keep thyn honour & thyn estat  
 Aftyr þat day we ne haddyn neuere debat  
 God help me so I was to hym as kynde  
 As ony wif from denmark vn-to Inde 824  
 And as trewe & so was he to me  
 I preye to god þat sit in mageste  
 So blysse his soule for his mercy dere  
 Now wele I seye myn tale ȝif ȝe wele here 828

[*The Wrangle between the Summoner and Friar.*]

The frere low whan he hadde herd al this  
 Now dame quod he also haue I Ioye or blis  
 This is a long preamble of a tale  
 And whan þe somnour herde þe frere gale 832  
 Lo quod the sumnour bi goddys armys too  
 A frere wele entirmete hym euere mo  
 Lo goode men a flye & ek a frere  
 Wele falle in euery disch & matere 836  
 What spekest þou of perambulacioun  
 What amble or trotte or pes or go sit down  
 þou lettyst oure desport in þis matiere  
 ȝa wilt þou so syre somnour quod þe frere 840  
 Now by myn fey I schal er þat I go [leaf 222]  
 Telle of a sumnour a tale or too  
 That alle þe folk schul law he in þis place  
 Now ellis frere I be-schrewe thyn face 844  
 Quod this sumnour & I be-schrewe me  
 But ȝif I telle talis too or thre  
 Of freris er I come to Sidyngborne  
 That I schal make þyn herte for to moorne 848

ffor wel I wot þyn pacience is goon  
 Oure ost cryede pees & þat a-non  
 And seyde lat þe woman telle hire tale  
 3e fare as folk dronke were of ale 852  
 Doth dame tellyth forth 3oure tale & þat is best  
 Al redy sire *quod* sche ryght at 3oure lest  
 3if I haue lycens of þis worþi frere  
 3is dame telle forth & I schal here 856

Here endith þe prologe of the wyues tale of Bathe.

[*Gap of one line in the MS.*]

## Here begynnȳt the wyf of bathe hire tale

[leaf 222, back]

[*Painting of the Wife.*]

**I**N olde dayis of kyng Arthour  
 Of whiche þat brytons spekyng gret honour  
 Al was this lond ful fyld of fayrye  
 The elf quene wyth hire cumpanye 860  
 Dauncede ful ofte in manye a grene mede  
 This was the olde opynyoun as I rede  
 I speke of manye hunderede ȝeris a-go  
 But now can no man se eluys mo 864  
 ffor now the charite & þe prayeris  
 Of lymytouris & of opere holy frerys  
 That serchyn euery lond & euery strem  
 As thikke as motys in þe sone bem 868  
 Blessen halles chaumbery[s] kichenys bourys  
 Ceteis borwys<sup>1</sup> castelis hyghe tourys [1 rwys: *later.*]  
 Thropes bernys / Schipnes dayryis  
 That makyth that pere ben no fayryis 872  
 ffor pere as wont was<sup>2</sup> for to walke an elf [2 was: *later.*]  
 There walkyth now þe lymytour hym self  
 In vndirmelys & in morwenyngis  
 And seyth hyse matynys & hyse holye thyngis 876  
 As he goth in hyse lymytacioun  
 Wemen mowe go sauely vp & doun  
 In euery bussch & vndyr euery tree  
 There is nower non Incubus but he 880  
 And he wele don hym non dishonour  
 And so be-fel þat this kyng Arthour  
 Hadde in his hous a ryche bachelor  
 That on a day cam rydynge from reuer 884

And happede a-lone as sche was born  
 He saw a mayde cam rydyng hym by-for  
 Of whiche maydyn a-non maugry hire hed  
 By veray forse by-rafte he hire maydynhed 888  
 ffor which apprecioun was swych clamour  
 And swych pursut to kyng arthour  
 That dampnede was the knyzt for to be ded  
 By cours of lawe & schulde a lost hyse heed 892  
 Peraenture swich was the statute þo  
 But that þe queen & opere ladyis moo  
 So longe preyedyn the kyng of grace [leaf 223]  
 Tyl he his lyf grauntede at þat place 896  
 And ȝaf hym to the queen at hire wille  
 To chese wheþer sche wolde hym saue or spille  
 The queen thanked þe kyng with al hyre myzt  
 And aftyr this þus spak sche to þe knyzt 900  
 Whan sche saw hyre tyme vp-on a day  
 Thow stondist ȝit quod sche in swich aray  
 That of thyn lyf [thou] hast no surete  
 I graunte þe lyf ȝif þou canst telle me 904  
 What thyng ist that women most desyryn  
 Be-war & kep thyn neke bon from yryn  
 And ȝif þou canst not telle me anon  
 ȝit wele I ȝeue þe leue for to goon 908  
 A twelvemonyth & a day to lere  
 An answeere sufficiaunt in this matire  
 And surete wele I haue er þat þou pace  
 Thyn body for to ȝildyn in þis place 912  
 Wo was this knyzt & sorwefully he sikede  
 But ȝit may he nat don as hym lykede  
 And at þe laste he ches hym for to weende  
 And come a-ȝen ryzt at þe ȝerys ende 916  
 With swich answeere as god wolde hym purueye  
 And takyth his leue & wendyth forth hyse weye  
 And sekyth euery hous & euery place  
 Where as he hopith to fynde grace 920



To lernyn what thyng wemen louyn most  
 But he ne coude aryun In no cost  
 Where as he myȝte fynde in this matyre  
 Two wightis a-cordyn in fyre 924  
 Some men seydyn wemen louyn best rychesse  
 Some men seyde honour some <sup>1</sup>iolynesse<sup>1</sup> [<sup>1</sup> written over  
 an erasure.]  
 Some men seyde ryche aray some lust in bedde  
 And ofte tyme be wedewe & ofte I-wedde 928  
 Some men seyde oure herte is most I-esed  
 Whan þat we been I-flatered & I-pled  
 He goth ful nygh þe sothe I nyl not lye  
 A man schal wynne vs best with flaterye 932  
 And with attendaunce & besynesse [leaf 223, back]  
 Be we I-lymyd boþe more & lesse  
 And some men seyn þat we louyn best  
 ffor to be fre & do ryȝt as vs lest 936  
 And þat no man repreue vs of oure vice  
 But seye þat we be wys & no thyng nyse  
 ffor trewely þere is non of vs alle  
 ȝif ony wyȝt wele clawe vs on the galle 940  
 That we nolde kyke for he seyth vs soth  
 Asay he schal fynde it þat so doth  
 ffor be we neuere so vicious with-inne  
 We wele be holde wis & clene of synne 944  
 And some seyn that gret loue haue we  
 ffor to ben holde wyse & secre  
 And in on purpos stedefastly to dwelle  
 And not be wreye thyng þat men vs telle 948  
 But þat tale nys not worth a rake stele  
 Parde we wemen can nothyng hele  
 Witnesse of Mida wil ȝe here þe tale  
 Ouyde a-mongis opere thyngis smale 952  
 Seyde Mida hadde vndyr hyse longe herys  
 Growynge on his hed two assis erys  
 The whiche vice he hyde as he best myghte  
 fful subtyly from euery manys syȝte 956

That saue his wyf þere wiste of it no mo  
 He louede hyre most & trostid to hyre also  
 He preyede hyre þat to no cryature  
 Sche schulde telle of his disfigure 960  
 Sche swor hym nay for al this world to wyne  
 Sche nolde not do þat vilany or synne  
 Go make hyre husbonde to haue so foul a name  
 Sche nele it telle for hyre owene schame 964  
 But neuere-þe-les hire thouzte þat sche dyde  
 That sche so longe a conseylde hyde  
 Hire thouzte it swal so sore a-boute hyre herte  
 That nedely sum word muste a-sterter 968  
 And sythe sche durste telle it to no man  
 Doun to a mareys faste by sche ran  
 Tyl sche cam þere hire herte was a fyre [leaf 224]  
 And as a bitore bumbith in þe myre 972  
 Sche leyde hyre mouth to þe watyr adoun  
 Be-wrey me not þou watyr with thyn soun  
 Quod sche to þe I telle it & no mo  
 Myn husbonde hath longe erys too 976  
 Now is al myn herte hol now is it oute  
 I myzte no lengere kepe it out of doute  
 Here may 3e se þow we no tyme abyde  
 3it out mote it we can no conseyl hyde 980  
 The remenaunt of þe tale 3if 3e wele here  
 Rede ouyde & þere mowe 3e it leere  
 This knyzt of which myn tale is specyally  
 Whan he saw he myzte not come þerby 984  
 This is to seye what women louyn most  
 With-inne his brest full sorwefully was þe gost  
 But hom he goth he myzte not soiorne  
 The day was come that homward muste he turne 988  
 And In hyse wey as happede hym to ryde  
 In al hise care vndyr a forest syde  
 Where as he saw vp-on a daunce go  
 Of ladyis foure & twenty & 3it mo 992

Toward þis dauns he drow ful 3erne  
 In hope þat sum wisdam schulde he lerne  
 But serteyn fully er he cam ther  
 Vanysschid was the daunce he nyste wher 996  
 No cryateure saw he þat bar lyf  
 Saue on þe grene he saw syttynge a wyf  
 A foulere wyzt þere may no man devyse  
 A-3ens þis knyzt this olde whyt gan ryse 1000  
 And seyde syre knyzt here forth lyth no weye  
 Telle 3e me what 3e seke be 3oure feye  
 Perauenture þe betere may it be  
 These olde folk can moche thyng *quod* sche 1004  
 Myn leue modyr *quod* this knyght serteyn  
 I ne am but deed but 3if þat I can seyn  
 What thyng ist þat wemen most desyre  
 Koude 3e me wische I wolde quyte 3oure hyre 1008  
 Plyghte me þyn treuth in myn hond *quod* sche [leaf 224, back]  
 The nexte thyng that I require the  
 Thow shalt it do 3if it be in þy myght  
 And I wele telle it 3ow er it be nyght 1012  
 Hauē her myn trouthe *quod* þe knyght I graunte  
 Thanne *quod* sche I dar me wel a-vaunte  
 Thyn lyf is saf I wele stonde þerby  
 Vp-on myn lyf þe quen wele seye as I 1016  
 Lat se which is þe proudest of hem alle  
 That weryth on a couerechief or a calle  
 Tha[t] dar sey nay of þat I schal the teche  
 Lat vs go forth with oute lengere speche 1020  
 Tho rounnede sche a pistyl in hyse ere  
 And bad hym to be glad & haue no fere  
 Whan þey been comyn to þe court þis knyzt  
 Seyde þat he hadde holde his day þat he hyzt 1024  
 And redy was his answeere as he sayde  
 fful manye a nobele wyf & manye a mayde  
 And manye a wedewe for þat þey ben wyse  
 The queen hire self syttynge as a iustyse 1028

Assemblede been his answerys for to here  
 And afterward þis knyzt was bode to pere  
 To euery wyzt was comaundede silence  
 And þat þe knyzt schulde telle in audyence 1032  
 What thyng þat wordely women louyn best  
 The knyzt stod not stille as a beest  
 But to his questioun a-non answerde  
 With manly voys þat al þ<sup>e</sup> court it herde 1036  
 Myn lige lady generally *quod* he  
 Wemen desyryn to han souereynste  
 As wel ouyr hire husbondis as ouer hire hove  
 And for to been in maystrye hem a-boue 1040  
 This is þe moste desyr thow 3e me kyllle  
 Doth as 3ow leste I am al at 3oure wille  
 In al þe court ne was þere wif ne mayde  
 Ne wedewe contraryede þat he sayde 1044  
 But seydyn þat he was worthi to han his lyf  
 And with that word vp sterte þe olde wyf  
 Whiche þat þe knyzt saw syttyng on þe grene [leaf 225]  
 Mercy *quod* sche myn souereyn lady quene 1048  
 Er þat 3oure court departe doth me ryght  
 I taughte this answer to þ<sup>e</sup> knyth  
 ffor which he plyzte me his trouthe þere  
 The fyrste thyng þat I wolde hym requere 1052  
 He wolde it do 3if it lay in his myzt  
 By-fore þe court þanne preye I þe syre knyzt  
 Quod sche þat þou me take on to þyn wyf  
 ffor weel þou wist þat I haue kept þyn lyf 1056  
 3if I seye fals say nay vp-on þy fey  
 This knyzt answerde allas & weyleaway  
 I wot ryzt wel þat swich was myn beheste  
 ffor goddys loue as ches a newe requeste 1060  
 Tak al myn good & lat myn body goo  
 Nay þanne *quod* sche I be schrewe vs boþe too  
 ffor þow I be foul old & pore  
 I nolde for al þ<sup>e</sup> metal ne for ore 1064



That vndyr þe erþe is graue or lyth a-boue  
 But ȝif þyn wyf I were & ek þyn loue  
 Myn loue *quod* he nay myn dampnacyoun  
 Allas þat ony of myn nacyoun / 1068  
 Schulde euere so foule disparagit be  
 But al for nouȝt þanne is þis *quod* sche  
 Constreynede was he nedys he muste hyre wedde  
 And takyth his olde wif & goth to bedde 1072  
 Now wil some men seye parauenture  
 That for myn neclygens I do no cure  
 To telle ȝow þe ioie & also tharray  
 That at þat ilke feste was þat day 1076  
 To whiche thyng sothely I answere schal  
 And seye þere was no Ioye ne feste at al  
 There was but heuynesse & meche sorwe  
 ffor priuily he wedde hire in þe morwe 1080  
 And al day aftyr hydde hym as an houle  
 So 'wo was<sup>1</sup> hym his wyf lokede so foule [1—1 later]  
 Gret was þe wo þe knyȝt hadde in his thouȝt  
 Whan he was wyth his wyf in bedde I-brouȝt 1084  
 He walwith & he turnyth too & fro [leaf 225, back]  
 This olde wif lay smyllynge euere mo  
 And seyde o dere husbende benedicite  
 ffaryth euery knyȝt with his wyf as ȝe 1088  
 Is þis þe lawe of kyng arthures hous  
 Is euery knyȝt of his þus daungerous  
 I am ȝoure owene loue & ȝoure wyf  
 I am sche þat sauede hath ȝoure lyf 1092  
 And sertis I dede ȝow neuere vnryȝt  
 Whi fare ȝe þus with me þe ferste nyȝt  
 ȝe fare lyk a man þat hadde lost his wit  
 What is myn gilt for godis loue telle me it 1096  
 And it schal been a-mendit ȝif þat I may  
 A-mendit *quod* this knyȝt allas nay nay  
 It wele not been a-mendit neuere mo  
 Thow art so loothly old & so pore also 1100



And þerto comyn of so low a kynde  
 That lytyl wondir ist þow I walwe & wynde  
 So wolde god myn herte wolde breste  
 Is þis *quod* sche þe cause of 3oure onreste 1104  
 3a serteynly *quod* he no wondir is  
 Now sere *quod* sche I coude a-mende al þis  
 3if þat me lyste er it were dayis thre  
 So wel my3te 3e bere 3ow to me 1108  
 But for 3e speke of swich gentillesse  
 As is dessendit out of olde richesse  
 That þerfore schul 3e ben holdyn gentil men  
 Swich arrogauce is not worth an hen 1112  
 Loke ho þat is most verteuous alwey  
 Pryue & apert & most entendyth ay  
 To do þe gentyl dedys þat he can  
 Take hym for þe gretteste gentil man 1116  
 Cryst wele we cleyme of hym oure gentylesse  
 Noghit of oure elderys for oure olde rychesse  
 ffor þow þey 3eue vs al here erytage  
 ffor which we cleymyng to been of high parage 1120  
 3it may þey not by-quethe for no thyng  
 To noon of vs here verteuous lyuyng  
 That made hem gentylmen I-callede be [leaf 226]  
 And bad vs foldyn hem in swich degre 1124  
 Weel can þe wise poete of florence  
 That hy3t dant declare þis sentence  
 Lo in swych a manere rym is dantes tale  
 fful selde vp rysith by hyse braunchis smale 1128  
 Prowesse of man for god of his prowesse  
 Wele þat we cleyme of hym oure gentillesse  
 ffor of oure eldere we may no thyng cleyme  
 But temperel thyng þat man may hurte & mayme 1132  
 Ek euery wy3t wot þis as wel as I  
 3if gentillesse were plantid naturelly  
 Vp to a certeyn lennage doun be lyne  
 Preue nor apert þanne wolde þey neuere fyne 1136

To don of gentillesse þe offys  
 They myȝte don no vilenye nor vice  
 Tak fyr & bere in þe derkeste hous  
 Be-twyxe this & þe mount of Cankerous 1140  
 And let men schette þe dore & go þenne  
 ȝit wil þe fyr lye as fyr & brenne  
 As twenty thousent men myȝte it by-holde  
 His offise naturel ay wel it holde 1144  
 Vp peril of myn lyf tyl þat it deye  
 Here may ȝe wel sen how þat genterye  
 Is not annexed to possescioun  
 Sithe folk ne don here operacioun 1148  
 Alwey as doth the fyr in hise kynde  
 ffor I wot men may ful ofte fynde  
 A lordis sone do schame & vilanye  
 And he þat wele haue prys of his genterye 1152  
 ffor he was bore of a gentyl hous  
 And hadde hise olderis nobele & vertuous  
 And nyle hym self don non gentyle dedis  
 Ne folwe his gentyle auncetere þat deed is 1156  
 He nys not gentyl be he duk or el  
 ffor violens synful dedys make eke a cherl  
 ffor gentillesse nys but renomee  
 Of thynne auncestris for here hygh bounte 1160  
 Whiche is a strong thyng to thyn persone [leaf 226, back]  
 The gentillesse comyth from god a-lone  
 Thanne comyth oure verray gentillesse of grace  
 It was no thyng be-quethe vs with oure place 1164  
 Thyȝkith how nobele as seyth valerius  
 Was that ilke tullius hostilius  
 That out of pouert ros to gret noblesse  
 Redyth senec & redith eek boece 1168  
 Ther schul ȝe se expres þat no dred is  
 That he is gentyl that doth gentyl dedis  
 And þerfore leue husbonde I thus conclude  
 Al were it þat myne auncestris were reude 1172

3it may þe hye god & so hope I  
 Graunte me grace to leue verteuosly  
 Thanne am I gentyl whan þat I be-gynne  
 To leuyn verteuously & leuyn synne 1176  
 And þere as 3e of pouert me repreue  
 The hye god of whom 3e me repreue  
 In wilful pouert ches to lede his lyf  
 And certys euery man mayde or wyf 1180  
 May vnderstondyn Ihesus<sup>1</sup> heuene kyng [1 MS Ihe]  
 Ne wolde not chese an vicious leuyng  
 Glad pouert is an oneste thyng certeyn  
 This wele Senek & opere clerkys seyn 1184  
 Ho so hym halt payed of his pouerte  
 I holde hym ryche hadde he but a sherte  
 He þat coueytyth is a pore wight  
 ffor he wolde han þat is not in his myȝt 1188  
 But he þat nought haht ne coueythit to haue  
 Is<sup>2</sup> riche al-thow men holde hym but a knaue [2 s later]  
 Veray pouert it syngith properly  
 Iuenal seyth of pouerte meryly 1192  
 The poure man whan he goth by the weye  
 By-fore þe thewis he may synge & pleye  
 Pouerte is hateful good as I gesse  
 A ful gret bryngere out of besinesse 1196  
 A gret amendere ek of sapience  
 To hem þat takyth it in pacience  
 Pouerte is this al-thow it seme alenge [leaf 227]  
 Possessioun þat no man wele calenge 1200  
 Pouerte ful ofte whan a man is lowe  
 Makyth his god & hym self to knowe  
 Pouerte a spectacle is as thynkyth me  
 Thorw which he may his veray frend I-se 1204  
 And perfore syre syn þat I ȝow not greue  
 Of myn pouerte no more 3e me repreue  
 Now syre of olde 3e repreue me  
 And sertis syde thogh non autoryte 1208

Were in no bok the gentylys of honour  
 Seyn *þat* men schuld an old wyȝt don fauour  
 And clepyn hym fadyr of ȝoure gentillesse  
 And auctouris schal I fyndyn as I gesse 1212  
 Now *þere* ȝe seyn I am foul & old  
 Thanne drede ȝow not to ben a coukewold  
 ffylthe & elde alsomote I the  
 Ben gret wardaynys vp-on chastite 1216  
 But natheles sythe I knowe ȝoure delyt  
 I schal fulfyllen ȝoure wordely apetyt  
 Chese now *quod* sche on of *þese* thyngis tweye  
 To haue me foul & old tyl *þat* I deye 1220  
 And be to ȝow a trewe vmbly wyf  
 And neuere ȝow displese in al myn lyf  
 Or ellis ȝe wele haue me ȝyng & fayr  
 And take *þe* auenture of the repayr 1224  
 That schal be to ȝoure hous be cause of me  
 Or in sum oþer place may wel be  
 Now cheseth ȝoure selue wheþer *þat* ȝow likyth  
 This knyȝt a-uyseth hym & sore sykyth 1228  
 But at *þe* laste he seyde in þis manere  
 Myn lady & myn loue & myn wyf so dere  
 I putte me in ȝoure wise gouernaunce  
 Cheseth ȝoure self whiche may be most plesaunce 1232  
 And most honour to ȝow & me also  
 I do no fors wheþer of the too  
 ffor as ȝow lykyth it suffyseth me  
 Thanne haue I gete *þe* maysterye *quod* sche 1236  
 Syn I may chese & gouerne as me leste [leaf 227, back]  
 ȝa sertys wif *quod* he I helde it for *þe* beste  
 Kis me *quod* sche we be no lengere wrothe  
 ffor be myn trouthe I wele be to ȝow bothe 1240  
 That is to seyne bothe fayr & good  
 I preye to god I mote sterwe wod  
 But I to ȝow be al so good & trewe  
 As euere was wyf syn *þat* *þe* world was newe 1244

And but I be to morwe as fayr to sene  
 As eny lady Emperesse or quene  
 That euere was be-twixse þe Est & þ<sup>e</sup> west  
 Doth with myn lyf & doth ryȝt as ȝow lest 1248  
 Cast vp þe curtyn & loke how þat it is  
 And whan þat þe knyght saw verrayly al þis  
 That sche so fayr was & so ȝyng þerto  
 ffor ioye he hente hyre in hise armys too 1252  
 His herte bathit in a bath of blys  
 A thousent sythe a rowe he gan hire kys  
 And sche obeyede hym in euery thyng  
 That myȝte do hym plesaunce or lykyng 1256  
 And þus þey lyue vn-to here lyuys ende  
 In parfyt Ioye & Ihesu crist vs synde  
 Husbondis meke ȝinge & frosche in bedde  
 And grace to ouer byde hem þat we wedde 1260  
 And ek I preye Ihesu schorte here lyuys  
 That wele not been gouernyd by here wyuys  
 And olde & angry nygardys of dispence  
 God sende hem sone verray pestelence 1264

Here endith the Wif of Bathe hyre tale

[Gap of one line in the MS.]



Here begynnyth the prologe of the frerys tale. [lf 227, bk]

[Gap of 6 lines in the MS. Leaf 228 (containing 'prologe', painting, and 22 lines of the tale) has been cut out.]

**T**His worthi<sup>1</sup> lymytour/ this noble frere. [Harl. MS 1758,  
leaf 102]  
he made alweie a maner/<sup>1</sup> louryng chere. [1 worthi,  
a maner,  
yet, in the  
margin]  
vp-on the Sompnour but yet<sup>1</sup> for honeste.  
No vilenous worde as yet spak/ he. . 1268  
But at the laste he seide vn-to the wif.  
Dame gode god yeue you right good lif/.

Ye han touched here also mote I the.

In scole mater/ gret/ difficulte. 1272

Ye han seide mocheH thyng right weH I seie. [leaf 102, back]

But dame here as we riden bi the weie.

Vs nedith not to speken but of game.

And late auctorites go<sup>2</sup> a goddis name. [2 go in margin]

To prechyng/ & to scole eke of clergie.

But if it like vn-to this companye.

I wiH you of a somnour telle a game.

Parde ye may weH knowe be the name. 1280

That of no somnour may no gode be saide.

I praye that non of you be euyH a-paide.

A Somnour is a romere vp & doun.

With maundementis/ of ffornycacioun. 1284

And is bete at euery townes ende.

Our/ oost tho spak a sir/ ye schulde ben hende.

And curteis as man of your/ estate.

In companye we woH no debate. 1288

Telleth your/ tale & lateth the Somnour be.

Nay quod the Somnour late hym saie<sup>3</sup> to me [3 saie in margin]

What so hym list whan it cometh to my lot.

Bi god I schafH hym quyte euery grot. 1292

I schafH hym telle whiche a gret honour/.

It is to be a flateryng<sup>1</sup> lymytour/.

And eek/ of fuH manye another/ cryme.

Whiche nedith not rehersen at this tyme. 1296

And his office I schafH hym telle y-wis.

Our/ hoste answerid pees no more of this.

And aftirwarde he seide vn-to the frere.

Tell forth your/ tale my leue maister/ dere. 1300

Here endith the prolog/.

and begynneth the tale :. [Harl. MS 1753, on  
leaf 102, back]

**W** Hilom ther/ was dwellyng/ in my contre .  
 An Erchedekene a man of hye degre .  
 That boldely dide execucioun .  
 In ponyschyng<sup>t</sup> of ffornycacioun . 1304  
 Of wicchecraft<sup>e</sup> & eek/ of baudrie .  
 Of diffamaciou<sup>n</sup> & avoutrie .  
 Of chirche reeves & of testamentis .  
 Of contractis & of lak/ of sacramentis . 1308

Of vsure & Symonye also .

But certis lecchours dide he most wo .

Thei schulden syngen if thei were hent .

And smale tithers weren foule schent . 1312

Yf any persone wolde vp-on hem pleyne .

Ther/ myght a-ster<sup>t</sup>e hym no pecunya<sup>h</sup> peyne .

ffor smale tithes & eek/ smale offerynge .

he made the peple spitously to synge . 1316

ffor or the Bischop caughte hem with his hooke .

Thei weren in the Erchedekenes booke .

And then had he thorow his Iurdiccion . [leaf 103]

Power/ to doon on hem correccion . 1320

he had a Sompnour redy to his honde .

A slier/ boie was non in Engelande .] [Harl. extract ends]

ffor subtilly he hadde hise expyayle [MS Gg. 4. 27, leaf 229]

That tau<sup>3</sup>te hym where hym my<sup>3</sup>te a-vayle 1324

He coude spare of lechourys on or two

To techyn hym to foure & twenty mo

ffor þow þis somenour wood were as an hare

To telle his harloterye I wele not spare 1328

ffor we ben out of his coreccioun  
 They han of vs no Iurediccioun  
 Ne neuere ne schuln of alle here lyuys  
 Petyr so been wemen at þe styuys 1332  
 Quod þe somenour I-put out of oure cure  
 Pees *with* myschaunce & with mysauenture  
 Thus seyde oure ost & lat hym telle his tale  
 Now tellith forth þow þat þe somenour gale 1336  
 Ne sparyth not myn owene maystyr dere  
 This false thef þis somenour *quod* þe frere  
 Hadde alwey baudys redy to his hond  
 As ony hauk to lure in ingelond 1340  
 That tolde hym al þe secre þat þey knewe  
 ffor hire aqueyntauns was not comyn of newe  
 They were hise apprououris pryuyly  
 He tok hym self a profyt *þerby* 1344  
 His maystyr knew not alwey what he wan  
 With-outyn maundement a lewede man  
 He coude somounne vp peyne of crystis curs  
 And þey were ful glad to fille his purs 1348  
 And made hym noble festis at þe nale  
 And ryȝt as Iudas hadde purse smale  
 And was a thef ryȝt swich a thef was he  
 Hise mayster hadde but half his duete 1352  
 He was ȝif I schal ȝeuyn hym hise lawede  
 A thef & ek a somenour & a baude  
 He hadde ek wenchis at his retenew  
 That wheþer syre Robert oþer syre Hewe 1356  
 Or Iakke or Raf or who so þat it were  
 That lay by hem þey tolde it in hise ere  
 Thus was þe wenche & he at on assent  
 And he wolde feche a feynede maundement 1360  
 And somoun hem to chapitere boþe two [leaf 229, back]  
 And pile þe man & lete þe wenche go  
 Thanne wolde he sey frend I schal for thyn sake  
 Don stryke þe out of oure letteris blake 1364

The thar no more as in þis cas trauayle  
 I am thyn frend þere I þe may a-vayle  
 Certeyn he knew of bryberyis mo  
 Than possible is to telle in 3eris two 1368  
 ffor in þis world nys doge for þe bowe  
 Than kan an hurt der from an hol knowe  
 Bet þan þe somenour knew a sly lechour  
 Or auoutir or a paramour 1372  
 And for þat was þe freut of al his rente  
 Therfore he sette on it al hyse entente  
 And so be-fel þat onys on a day  
 This somenour euere waytynge on hyse pray 1376  
 Wente for to somounne a wedewe an old rybibe  
 ffeynynge a cause for he wolde brybe  
 And happede he saw by-fore hym ryde  
 A gay 3eman vndir a forest syde 1380  
 A bowe he bar & arwis bry3te & kene  
 He hadde up-on a courtepy of grene  
 An hat vp-on his hed with frengis blake  
 Syre quod þe somenour wel a-take 1384  
 Wolcome quod he & euery good felawe  
 Wheþer rydistow vndyr þis grene wode schawe  
 Seyde þis 3eman wilt þou fer to day  
 This somenour answerde & seyde nay 1388  
 Here faste by is myn entente  
 To rydyn & to reysyn vp a rente  
 That longith on to myn lordis duete  
 Art þou þanne a baylyf / ye quod he 1392  
 He durste not for veray fylthe & schame  
 Seye he was a somenour for þe name  
 De-pardeus quod þis 3eman leue broþer  
 Thou art a balyf & I am a-noþer 1396  
 I am onknowyn as in þis cuntre  
 Of thyn aqueyntauns I wolde preye þe  
 And ek of brotherhode 3if that 3ow leste [leaf 230]  
 I haue gold & siluyr in myn cheste 1400



3if þat 3e happyn to comyn in oure schyre  
 Al schal be ryȝt as 3e wele desyre  
 Graunt mercy *quod* þis somenour be myn fey[th]  
 Eueryche in oþeres hand his trouthe leyth 1404  
 ffor to ben swore breþeryn tyl þey deye  
 In daliaunce þey ryde forth & pleye  
 This somenour þat was so ful of Iangelys  
 As ful of venym ben þese variangelys 1408  
 And euere enquyrynge vp-on euery thyng  
 Brothir quod he where is 3oure dwellyng  
 A-noþer day 3if þat I schulde 3ow seche  
 This 3eman hym answerede in softe speche 1412  
 Broþer quod he fer in þe north cuntre  
 Where as I hope sumtyme I schal þe se  
 Er we departe I schal þe so wel wische  
 That of myn hous ne shalt þou neuere mysse 1416  
 Now broþer *quod* þe somenour I 3ow preye  
 Teche me whils þat 3e ryde by þe weye  
 Syn þat 3e be a balyf as am I  
 Sum subtilete & telle me feythfully 1420  
 In myn offys how I may most wyne  
 And sparyth not for concience ne for synne  
 But as myn broþer telle me how do 3e  
 Now by myn trouthe broþer dere seyde he 1424  
 As I schal telle þe a feythful tale  
 Myne wagis been ful streyte & ful smale  
 Myn lord is hard to me & daungerous  
 And myn offys is ful laberous 1428  
 And þerfore by extorciounys I leue  
 ffor sothe I take al þat men wele me 3eue  
 Algate by sleȝte or by violence  
 ffrom 3er to 3er I wyne al myn dispence 1432  
 I can no betere telle feythfully  
 Now sertis *quod* þis somenour so fare I  
 I spare not to take god it wot  
 But 3if it be to heuy or to hoot 1436



What I may gete in conseyl pryuyly [leaf 230, back]  
 No manere concience haue I  
 Nere myn extorcioun I myȝte not lyue  
 Ne of sweche Iapis I wele not be schreue 1440  
 Stomak ne concience knowe I non  
 I schrewe þese schryft faderys euerychon  
 Wel be we met by god & by seynt Iame  
 But leue broþer telle me þanne þyn name 1444  
 Quod this somenour & in þis mene while  
 This ȝeman gan a lytyl for to smyle  
 Broþer quod he wilt þou þat I þe telle  
 I am a fend myn dwellyng is in helle 1448  
 And here I ryde a-boute myn purchasyng  
 To wete where men wolde ȝeue me ony thyng  
 Myn purchas is þe effect of al myn rente  
 Loke how þou rydist for þe same entente 1452  
 To wyne good þou rekist neuere how  
 Ryght so fare I for ryde wolde I now  
 Vnto þe worldis ende for a preye  
 A quod þe somenour benediste what seye 1456  
 I wende ȝe were a ȝeman trewely  
 ȝe haue a manys schap as wel as I  
 H[a]ue ȝe a figure þanne determynat  
 In helle þere ȝe ben in ȝoure estat 1460  
 Nay serteyn quod he þere haue we non  
 But whan vs lykyth þanne can we takyn on  
 Or ell make ȝow seme þat we been schape  
 Sumtyme lyk a man or lyk an ape 1464  
 Or lyk an aungel can I ryde or go  
 It is no wondyr thyng thow it be so  
 A lousy iogelour can deseyue þe  
 And parde ȝit can I more craft þan he 1468  
 Whi quod þe somenour ride ȝe þanne or gon  
 In sundery schap & not alwey in on  
 ffor we quod he wele vs swich formys make  
 As most able is oure prey for to take 1472

What makyth þow to haue al þis labour  
 fful manye a cause leue sire Somenour  
 Seyde þis fend but alle thyng hath tyme [leaf 231]  
 The day is schort / & it is passede pryme 1476  
 And ȝit ne wan I no thyng on this day  
 I wele entende to wynnyng ȝif I may  
 And noght entende oure wordis to declare  
 ffor broþer myn thyn wit is al to bare 1480  
 To vndyrstonde al thow I tolde hem the  
 But for þou axsyst why laboure we  
 ffor sumtyme we ben goddys instrumentis  
 And meeu[n] for to don hise comaundementis 1484  
 Whan þat hym lyste vp-on hyse creaturys  
 In dyuerse art & in dyuerse figurys  
 With-outyn hym we haue no myȝt certeyn  
 ȝif þat him liste stande þere ageyn 1488  
 And sumtyme at oure preyere han we leue  
 Only þe body but not þe soule to greue  
 [Wytnesse on Iob whom þat we · did woo [Sloane MS 1685,  
 And some tyme haue we myȝt of bothe two] leaf 122]  
 This is to seyne of soule & body ek  
 And sumtyme be we sufferede for to sek  
 Vp-on a man & don his soule onreste  
 Noght his body & al is for þe beste 1496  
 Whan he withstandith oure temptacioun  
 It is þe cause of his sauacioun  
 Al be it þat it was not oure entente  
 He schulde be saf but þat we wolde hym hente 1500  
 And sumtyme be we seruauuntys vn-to man  
 As to þe Erchebischop seynt Dunstan  
 And to þe apostell ek seruauaunt was I  
 ȝit telle me quod þe sumnour feythfully 1504  
 Make ȝe þow newe bodyis þus alwey  
 Of elementis / þe fend answerde nay  
 Sumtyme we feyne & sumtyme we areyse  
 With deede bodyis in ful sundery wyse 1508

And speke as renable & fayre & wel  
 As to þe Phitonyssa dede Samuel  
 And ȝit wele some men seyn it was nat  
 I do no fors of ȝoure dyuynyte 1512  
 But o thyng warne I þe I wele not iape  
 Thow wolt algatis wete how we ben schape  
 Thow schalt here aftyward myn broþer dere [leaf 231, back]  
 Come / where þe nedyth not of me to lere 1516  
 ffor þou schat by thyn owene experyence  
 Cunne in a chayer þanne rede þis sentence  
 Bet þan virgilie whilis he w[as] on lyue  
 Or daunt also whils he was on lyue 1520  
 ffor I wele holde cumpanye with þe  
 Til it be so þat þou for-sake me  
 Nay quod þe somenour þat schal neuere be-tyde  
 I am a ȝeman knowyn is ful wyde 1524  
 Myn trouthe wele I holde [to þe as in þis caas [Sloane MS 1685,  
 ffor þouȝe þou were þe DeueH Sathanas leaf 122, back]  
 My troupe wolde I holde] myn leue broþer  
 As I am sworn and eche of vs tyl oþer 1528  
 ffor to be trewe broþer in þis cas  
 And boþe we gon a-boute oure purchas  
 Take þou þyn part of þat men wele þe ȝeue  
 And I schal myn þus may we boþe leue 1532  
 And ȝif þat ony of vs haue more þan oþer  
 Let hym be trowe & parte it with his broþer  
 I graunte quod þe deuyll be myn fey  
 And with þat word þey ryde forth here wey 1536  
 And ryȝt at þe enterynge at þe tounnys ende  
 To which þis somenour schop hym for to wende  
 The[y] saw a carte þat chargede was with hey  
 Which þat a Cartere drof ferth in þe wey 1540  
 Dep was þe weye for which þis carte stod  
 The cartere smot and cryede as he were wood  
 Hayt sket hayt lyarad hat brok atonys  
 The fend quod he ȝow feche body & bonys 1544

As ferforth as euere were 3e folyd  
 So meche woo as I haue with 3ow tholyd  
 The deuyl haue al boþe hors & carte & hey  
 The somenour seyde here schul we haue a pley 1548  
 And ner þe frere he drow as nouzt ne were  
 fful priuily & rounned in his ere  
 Herke myn broþer herke be thyn feith  
 Heryst þou nought how þe cartere seyth 1552  
 Hende it a-non for he hath 3ouen it þe  
 Boþe hey & carte & ek his capillis thre  
 Nay *quod* þe deuyl neuere a del [leaf 232]  
 It is not his entente troste wel 1556  
 Axe hym thyn self 3if þou not trostiste me  
 Or ellis stynte a-while & þou schat se  
 This cartere thakkyth hise hors vp-on þe croupe  
 And þey be-gunne to drawe & to stoupe 1560  
 Hayt now *quod* he now Ihesu cryst 3ow blysse  
 And al hise hondwerk boþe more & lesse  
 That was wel twyzt myn owene lyard boy  
 I preye god saue þe body & seynt loy 1564  
 Now is myn carte out of the slow parde  
 Lo broþer *quod* þe fend what tolde I the  
 Heere may 3e seen myn owene dere broþer  
 The cherl spak on thyng & mente a-noþer 1568  
 Lat vs gon forth a-boutyn oure viage  
 Here wyne I no good vp-on caryage  
 Whan þat þey comyn sumwhat out of tounne  
 This somenour to his broþer gan to rounne 1572  
 Broþer *quod* he here wonyth an old rebekke  
 That hadde almost as lef to lese his nekke  
 As for to 3eue a peny of hire good  
 I wele haue twelue penys thow sche be wood 1576  
 Or I wele somounne hyre to oure offys  
 And 3it god wot can I no vys  
 But for þou canyst not as in þis cuntre  
 Wynne thyn cost take here ensauple at me 1580



This somenour clepith at þe wedewis gate  
 Come out quod he þou olde verye crate  
 I trowe þou hast sum frere or prest with the  
 Ho clepith þere seyde þis widew benedicice 1584  
 God saue þow syre what is þoure swete wille  
 I haue quod he of somounys a bille  
 Vp peyne of cursynge loke þat þou be  
 To morwe by-fore þe Erchedekenys kne 1588  
 To answeere to þe court of serteyn thyngis  
 Now lord quod sche Ihesu kyng of kyngis  
 So wysely helpe me as I ne may  
 I haue be sek & þat ful manye a day 1592  
 I may not goon quod sche so fer ne ryde [leaf 232, back]  
 But I be ded so prykyth it in myn syde  
 May I not axe a libel syre somenour  
 And answeere þere by myn procatour 1596  
 To swich thyng as men wele oposyn me  
 þis quod this somenour pay a-non lat se  
 Twelue penys lat se & I wele þe aquyte  
 I schal no profyit haue þerby but lyte 1600  
 Myn maystir hath the profit & not I  
 Come of & let me rydyn hastely  
 zeue me twelve penys I may no lengere lette  
 Twelue penys quod sche now lady seynte marye 1604  
 So wysely helpe me out of care & synne  
 This wyde world þow þat I schulde wyne  
 Ne haue I not twelue penys with-inne myn holld  
 þe knowe wel þat I am pore & old 1608  
 Kythe þoure almesse on me pore wreche  
 Nay þanne quod he þe fend me feche  
 þif I þe excuse th[o]w þow schuldist be spylt  
 Allas quod sche god wot I haue no gilt 1612  
 Pay me quod he or be swete seynt anne  
 As I wele bere a-wey þyn newe panne  
 ffor dette whiche þou owist me of old  
 Whan þat þou haddist þyn husbonde coukewold 1616



I payede at hom for þyn coreccioun  
 Thow lyxt *quod* sche be myn sauacyoun  
 Ne was I neuere er no wedewe ne wyf  
 Somounede on to þoure court in al myn lyf 1620  
 Ne neuere I nas but of myn body trewe  
 Vn-to þe deuyl blak & row of hewe  
 ȝeue I thyn body & myn panne also  
 And whan þe deuyl herde hire curse so 1624  
 Vp-on hire kneis sche seyde on þis manere  
 Now mabelyn myn owene modir dere  
 Is þis þoure wille in earnest þat ȝe seye  
 The deuyl *quod* sche so feche hym er he deye 1628  
 And panne & al but he wele hym repente  
 Nay olde stot þat is not myn entente [Gg. 4. 27 stops]  
 [Quod þe Somnour for to repent me [Sloane 1685, leaf 124]  
 ffor eny þenge þat I haue hade of þe 1632  
 I wolde I hade þi smok/ & euery clothe  
 Nowe Broþer/ *quod* þe DeuyH be not wrothe  
 Thy body and þis panne ys myne by riȝt  
 Thou shalte with me to helle . ȝit to nyȝt/ 1636  
 þere þou shalt/ knowe of/ oure pryete  
 More þan a Maystre of/ Diuinite  
 And with þat worde þe foule fende hym hent  
 Body and soule with þe fende went 1640  
 Where þat Somonours haue hir/ herytage  
 And god þat made aftyr/ hys Image  
 Man-kynde saue and gyde vs alle and somme  
 And leue þis Somonour/ gode man by-come/. 1644  
 Lordynges I coude a tolde you *quod* þe frere [leaf 124, back]  
 Hade I hade leyser/ of thys Somnour here  
 After/ þe Tyxt/ Cryst poule & Iohā.  
 And of other/ doctours many oñ. 1648  
 Suche peynes þat youre hertes may a-gryse.  
 Also by hyt þat no þenge may deuyse.  
 Thou þat I myȝt/ a þousand wynter/ telle.  
 The peyne of pilke Cursed house of helle. 1652

But for to kepe vs fro þat cursed place	[Sloane 1685]
Wakethe and preithe Ihesu for his grace	
To kepe vs. fro þe Temptour/ Sathanas	
herken þis worde be ware in þis caas	1656
The lyonn sit in his wayt alway	
To sle þe Innocent yf þat he may	
Disposethe ay youre hertes to withstonde	
þe fende þat you wolde make þraff and bonde	1660
he may not tempten you ouere your myzt	
And Cryst woff be youre Champioun and your knyzt	
And preythe þat þis Sompnour/ hym repent	
Of/ hys mysdede or þe fende hym hent	1664

Here endethe þe ffreres tale

[*Harl. MS 1758, leaf 106, back.*]

[Here begynneth the Prolog/ of the Somnour/.

**T**His Somnour/ in his stirop hye stood.  
 Vp-on this ffrere his herte was so wood.  
 That like an Aspen leef he quoke for yre.  
 Lordyngis *quod* he but oo thyng<sup>r</sup> I desire. 1668  
 I you beseke that of your/ curtesie.  
 Sethyns ye han herd this fals ffrere lye.  
 As suffreth me I maye a tale telle. [leaf 107]  
 This ffrere bosteth that he knoweth helle. 1672  
 And god woot that it is liteH wondir/.  
 ffreres & fendes ben but liteH a sondir/.  
 ffor parde ye han ofte tyme herd telle.  
 how that a ffrere rausched was in <sup>1</sup>to helle. [<sup>1</sup> to *is in margin*]  
 In spirit onys by a visioun.  
 And as an angeH lad hym vp & doun.  
 To schewyn hym the peynes that ther/ were.  
 In aH the place sawe he not a ffrere. 1680  
 Of other/ folke he sawe y-now in woo.  
 Vn-to this angeH spake the ffrere tho.  
 Now sir/ *quod* he han ffreres suche grace.  
 That non of hem schall come to this place. 1684  
 Yes *quod* this angeH manye a mylioun.  
 And vn-to Sathanas he lad hym a-doun.  
 And now hath Sathanas saith he a taile.  
 Bradder/ then of the Carik is the saile. 1688  
 Holde vp thyn taile Sathanas *quod* he.  
 Schewe forth thyne ers & lete the ffrere se.  
 Where is the neste of ffreres in this place.  
 And er/ that half/ a forlong/ wey of space. 1692

Right so as Bees swermen out of an hyue .	[Harl. 1758]
Out/ of the deuylls ers thei gon dryue .	
.xx <sup>th</sup> thousande ffreris on a route .	
And thorow-out helle swarmed aH a-boute .	1696
And camen a-yen as fast/ as thei may gone .	
And in his ers thei crepedyn euerichone .	
He clapt/ his tale a-yen & laye stiH .	
This ffrere when he lokid had his fiH .	1700
Vp-on this tormentis of this sory place .	
his spirit god restorid of his grace .	
Vn-to his bodye a-yen & he a-woke .	
But natheles for fere yet he quoke .	1704
So was the deuelis ars ay in his mynde .	
That is his heritage of verrey kynde .	
God saue you alle saue this cursid ffrere .	
Mi Prolog' wolH I ende in this manere .	1708

**Here endith the Prolog/**

[Harl. MS 1758, on leaf 106, back]

and begynneth the Tale .

**L**Ordynge ther/ is in york schire as I gesse .  
 A merschy contre called holdernesse .  
 In whiche ther/ wente a lymytour/ a-boute .  
 To preche & eek/ to begge it is no doute . 1712  
 And so bifeH that on a daye this frere .  
 had preched at chirche in this manere .  
 And specially a-bouyn euery thyng<sup>r</sup> .  
 Excited he the peple in his prechyng<sup>r</sup> . 1716  
 To trentalis & to yeue for goddis sake . [leaf 107, back]  
 Wher/-with men myghte holi housis/ make .  
 Ther/ as deuyne seruyse is honoured .  
 Nought ther/ as it is wasted & deuoured . 1720  
 Ne there it nedith not for to be yeue .  
 As to possessioners that may ellis lyue .  
 Thanked <sup>1</sup> be god in wele & habundaunce . [1 h, with the tail  
 scribht out]  
 Trentales seide he delyuerith fro penaunce . 1724  
 Here frendes soules as welH olde as yong<sup>r</sup> .  
 Yef<sup>r</sup> that thei ben hastely song<sup>r</sup> .  
 Nought for to holde a preest ioly & gay .  
 he syngeth not but oo messe in a day . 1728  
 Delyuerith out/ a man *quod* he the soulis .  
 ffuH hard it is with fleschehoke or with oulis .  
 Now spede you hastely for cristes sake . 1732  
 To kepe you fro peynes of fendis blake . 1731  
 And whan the frere had seide alle his entente .  
 With Qui cum patre forth he wente .  
 When folke in chirche had yeue hym what hem lest .  
 he wente his way no lenger/ wolde he rest . 1736



- With scrippe & tipped staf tucked full hye. [Harl. 1759]  
 In euery hous he gan to pore & pry.  
 And beggeth mele or chese or ellis corn.  
 his felalawe had a staf tipped with horn. 1740  
 A peire of/ tablis of yuory.  
 And a poynteH polched fetisly.  
 And wrot/ alweye the names there he stood.  
 Of alle folke that yaf hym any good. 1744  
 As-caunce as he wolde for hem preie.  
 Yeue vs a buscheH whete malt/ or reie.] [Harl. extract ends]  
 A godis kechil or a trip of chese [MS Gg. 4. 27, leaf 235]  
 Or ellis what 3ow lyste we may not chese 1748  
 A godis halpeny or a masse pany  
 Or 3eue vs of 3oure braun 3if 3e han any  
 A dagoun of 3oure blanket leue dame  
 Oure sistyr dere lo here I wryte 3oure name 1752  
 Bacoun or bef or swich þyng as 3e fynde  
 A sturdy harlot wente hem ay by-hynde  
 That was here ostys man & bar a sak  
 And what men 3oue hem leyde it on his bak 1756  
 And whan he was out at þe dore a-non  
 He planede a-wey þe namys euerychon  
 That he be-fore hadde wrytyn in hyse tablis  
 He servede hem with nyflys & wyth fablys 1760  
 Nay þere þou lext þou somenour quod þe frere  
 Pes quod oure ost for cristis modyr dere  
 Telle forth 3oure tale & spare it not at al  
 So thryue I quod the somenour so I schal 1764  
 So longe he wente hous be hous tyl he  
 Cam to an hous þere he was wone to be  
 Refresched more þan in an hunderede placis  
 Sek lay þe goode man whos þe place is 1768  
 Bedrede vp-on a couche lowe he lay  
 Deus hic quod he O tomays frend good day  
 Seyde þis frere curteysly & softe  
 Thomas quod he god 3elde 3ow ful ofte 1772

Haue I vp-on pis benche fare ful wel  
 Here haue I ete ful manye a murye mel  
 And fro þe bench he drof away þe cat  
 And leyde a-doun his potente & his hat 1776  
 And ek his scripype & sette hym softe adoun  
 His felawe was go walkede in þe toun  
 fforth with his knawe vn-to þat ostelrye  
 Where as he schop hym þe ilke nyzt to lye 1780  
 O dere maystir quod pis syke man  
 How haue ȝe fare sythe þat March be-gan  
 I saw ȝow not pis fourtenyzt or more  
 God wot quod he laboured haue I ful sore 1784  
 And sp[e]cially for thyn saluacioun [leaf 285, back]  
 Haue I seyð manye a precious orisoun  
 And for oure opere frendis god hem blysse  
 I haue to day been at ȝoure cherche at messe 1788  
 And seyð a sarmoun aftyr myn symple wit  
 Nat al aftyr þe text of holy wret  
 ffor it is hard to ȝow as I suppose  
 And þerfore wele I telle ȝow al þe glose 1792  
 Glosyng is a glorious thyng serteyn  
 ffor lettere sleth as wē clerkis seyn  
 There haue I tauzt hem to be charytable  
 And spende here good þere it is resonable 1796  
 And þere I saw oure dame a where is sche  
 ȝond in þe ȝerd I trowe þat sche be  
 Seyde pis man & sche wele come a-non  
 Ey maystir wolcome be ȝe by seynt Iohn 1800  
 Seyde pis wif how fare ȝe hertely  
 This frere arysith vp ful curteysly  
 And hire enbraseth in hise armys narwe  
 And kysseth hire swete / & chirketh as a sparwe 1804  
 With his lippis dame quod he ryzt wel  
 As he þat is ȝoure seruauant euerydel  
 Thankede be god þat ȝow ȝaf soule & lyf  
 ȝit saw I not pis day so fayr a wyf 1808

In al þe cherche god so saue me	
3a god amende þe fautis sere quod sche	
Algatis wolcome 3e by myn fey	
Graunt merci dame þis haue I founde alwey	1812
But of 3oure grete goodnesse by 3oure leue	
I wolde preye 3ow þat 3e nat 3ow greve	
I wele with Thomas speke a lytyl throwe	
These curatis been ful neglygent & slowe	1816
To grope tenderly a concience	
In schrifte in prechyng is myn diligence	
And stodie in peteris wordis & in Poulis	
I walke to fychen cristene menys soulys	1820
To 3ilde Ihesu crist / hise propre rente	
To sprede his word is set al myn entente	
Now by 3oure leue o deere maystyr quod sche	[leaf 236]
Schidith hym wel for seynte trynhte	1824
He is as angery as a pissemyre	
Thow that he haue al þat he can desyre	
Thow I hym wrye a nyȝt & make hym warm	
And ouer hym leye myn leg oþer myn arm	1828
He gronyth lik oure bor lyth in oure sty	
Oþer disport ryȝt non of hym haue I	
I may not plesse hym in no manere cas	
O Thomas Ie vous dy Thomas Thomas	1832
This makyth þe feen <sup>d1</sup> þis muste ben a-mendit	[ <sup>d1</sup> a: later]
Ire is a thyng þat highe god defendit	
And þerof wele I speke a word or two	
Now maystyr quod þe wyf er þan I go	1836
What wele 3e dyne I wele go þere aboute	
Now dame quod he Ie vous dy sanz doute	
Haue I nat of a capoun but þe lyuere	
And of 3oure softe bred but a scheuere	1840
And aftyr þat a rostede pigis hed	
But þat I nolde no beste for me were ded	
Thanne hadde I with 3ow homely suffysaunce	
I am a man of lytyl sustenaunce	1844

Myn spirit hath his fosterynge in þe bible  
 The bodi is ay so redy & penible  
 To wake þat myn stomak is distroyed  
 I prey 3ow dame 3e be nat a-nyed 1848  
 Thow I so frendely 3ow myn conseyll schewe  
 By god I nolde nat telle it but a fewe  
 Now syre quod sche but on word er I go  
 Myn child is deed with-inne these woukis too 1852  
 Sone after þat 3e wentyn out of þis toun  
 His deth saw I be reuelacioun  
 Seyde þis frere at hom in oure dortour  
 I dar wel seyn þat er þat half an our 1856  
 After his deth I saw hym bore to blysse  
 In myn auysioun god so me wisse  
 So dede oure sexteyn & oure fermorer  
 That han ben trewe frerys fifty 3er 1860  
 They may now god be thanked of his lone [leaf 236, back]  
 Makyn here Iubyle & walkyn a-lone  
 And vp I ros & al oure couent ek  
 With manye a tere trynkelynge on myn cheke 1864  
 With-outyn noyse or claterynge of bellis  
 Te deum was oure song & no thyng ellis  
 Saue þat to cryst I seyde an orysoun  
 Thankynge hym of myn reuelacioun 1868  
 ffor sere & dame trostith to me wel  
 Oure orisounys ben more effectuel  
 And more we sen of secre thyngis  
 Than burel folk al þow þey were kyngis 1872  
 We lyue in pouert & in abstinence  
 And burel folk in rychesse & dispence  
 In mete & drynk & in here foule delyt  
 We han þis wordelis lust al in dispit 1876  
 Lazar & dyuers leuedyn dyuers lyf  
 And dyuers gerdoun haddyn þey þerby  
 Ho so wele preye / hym muste faste & be clene  
 And fattyn his soule & make his body leene 1880



We faryn as seyth þe appostele cloth & fode	
Suffyseth vs / þow þey been not ful goode	
The clenness & þe fastynge of vs frerys	
Makyth þat cryst / acceptyth oure preyerys	1884
Lo moyses forty dayis & forty nyȝt	
ffastid er þat þe hyghe god of myȝt	
Spak with hym in þe mount of synay	
With emty wombe / fastynge manye a day	1888
Resseyuede he þe lawe þat was wretyn	
With godis fyngir & elye wolde wetyn	
In Mount oreb er he hadde any speche	
With hye god þat is oure lyuys leche	1892
He fastede longe & was in contemplaunce	
Aaron þat hadde þe temple in gouernaunce	
And ek þe opere postellis euerychon	
In-to þe temple whan þey schulde gon	1896
To preye for þe peple & do seruyse	
The[y] nolde drynke in no manere wyse	
No drynk whiche þat myȝte hem dronke make	[leaf 237]
But þere in abstinence preye & wake	1900
Lest þat þey dey <sup>1</sup> dyn tak hede what I seye	[1 y: later]
But þey ben sobere þat for þe puple preye	
War þat I seye no more for it suffyseth	
Oure lord Ihesu as holy wryt deuyseth	1904
ȝaf vs ensaumple of fastynge & preyerys	
There-fore we mendynauntis we frerys	
[Ben weddid to pouert <sup>1</sup> & contynence. [Harl. MS 1758, leaf 109, back]	
To charite humblennesse & pacience.	1908
To persecucion for rightwisnesse.	
To wepyng/ mysericord & clenness.	
And therefore maye ye se that our/ praieres.	
I speke of vs we mendenauntis we ffreres.] [Harl. extract stops]	
Been to þe hye god more acceptable	
Than ȝoure is / with ȝoure festis at þe table	
ffrom paradys fyrst ȝif I schal nat lye	
Was man out chased for his glotenye	1916



And chaast was man in paradys serteyn  
 But herke now thomas what I schal seyn  
 I ne haue of it no text as I suppose  
 But I schal fynde it in a-noþer glose 1920  
 That specyally oure swete lord Ihesus  
 Spak þis be freris whan he seyde þus  
 Blyssede ben þey þat poore in spiryt been  
 And so forth al þe gospel may 3e sen 1924  
 Wheþer it be lykere oure profescioun  
 Or hire þat swemyn in possessioun  
 ffy on hire pompe & on here gletenye  
 And for here lewedenesse I hem defye 1928  
 Me thynkyth þey been lyk to Iouynyan  
 ffat as a whal & walkynge as a swan  
 Al vinolent as botel in þe spence  
 Hire preyere is of ful gret reuerence 1932  
 Whan þey for soulis seyn þe salme of dauith  
 Lo buf þey seye / cor meum erouctauyth  
 Ho folwyth cristis gospel & hise fore  
 But we þat vmble ben & chaste & poore 1936  
 Werkeris of godis word not audytourys  
 Therfore ryȝt as an hauk ryȝt at a sourys  
 Vp spryngith in þe eyre ryȝt so preyeris  
 Of charytable & chaste besy freris 1940  
 Makyn here sours to goddys erys two  
 Thomas Thomas so mote I ryde or go  
 And by þe lord þat clepid is seynt Iue [leaf 237, baek]  
 Nere þou oure broþer schudist þou not thryue 1944  
 In oure chapitre preye we day & nyȝt  
 To cryst þat he þe sende hele & myȝt  
 Thyn body for to wendyn hastyly  
 God wot þerof nothyng þerof fele I 1948  
 So helpe me crist as in a fewe ȝeris  
 I haue spendit vp-on dyuers maner freris  
 fful manye a pound ȝit fare I neuere þe bet  
 Certeyn myn good haue I almost be-set 1952

ffarwel myn good for it is al a go  
 The frere answerde O thomas dost þou so  
 What nedyth ȝow dyuers frerys seche  
 What nedyth hym þat hath a parfit leche 1956  
 To sechyn opere lechis in þe toun  
 ȝoure inconstaunce is ȝoure confusioun  
 Holde ȝe þanne me or ellis oure couent  
 To preye for ȝow ben ensufficient 1960  
 Thomas þat lape nys nat worth a myte  
 ȝoure malady is for ȝe han to lyte  
 A ȝif þat couent half a quarter otys  
 And ȝif þat couent foure & twenty grotis 1964  
 And ȝif þat frere a peny & lat hym go  
 Nay nay Thomas It<sup>1</sup> may no thyng be so [1 t: later]  
 What is a ferthy[n]g worth partid on twelve  
 Lo eche thyng þat is onyd in hym selue 1968  
 Is more strong þan whan it is to-skateryd  
 Thomas of me þou schalt not<sup>2</sup> ben I-flatered [2 not: later]  
 Thow woldyst han oure labour al for nouȝt  
 The hie god þat al þis world hath wrouȝt 1972  
 Seyth þat þe werke man worthy is his hyre  
 Thomas noȝt of ȝoure tresore I desyre  
 As for myn self but þat al oure couent  
 To preye for ȝow is ay so diligent 1976  
 And for to bildyn cristis owene chyrche  
 Thomas ȝif ȝe wele lerne for to werche  
 Of bildyng vp of cherchis may ȝe fynde  
 ȝif it be good in Thomas lyf of ynde 1980  
 ȝe lye here ful of anguyssch & of yre [leaf 238]  
 With wych þe deuyl set ȝoure hette a-fyre  
 And chidyn here þis sely innosent  
 ȝoure wif þat is so meeke & pacient 1984  
 And þerfore Thomas trowe me if þe lest  
 Ne stryue nat with þyn wif as for þe best  
 And bere þis word a-woy now be þyn feyth  
 Touchynge swich thyng lo as þe wyse seyth 1988

With-inne þyn hous ne be þou no lyoun	
To þynne subiectis do non oppressioun	
Ne make þynne aquentauncis not to fle	
And Thomas ȝit eft' sonys I charge þe	1992
By-war from hire þat in þyn bosum slepith	
By-war from þe serpent þat so slyly crepith	
Vndyr þe gres & styngith subtyly	
By-war myn sone & herke paciently	1996
That twenty thousent men han lost here lyuys	
ffor stryuyng with here lemanys & here wyuys	
Now sithe ȝe han so holy meke a wyf	
What nedyth ȝow Thomas to makyn stryf	2000
There is I wis no serpent so crewel	
Whan man trat on his tayl ne half so fel	
As woman is whan sche hath cauȝt an yre	
Veniaunce is þanne al þat þey desyre	2004
Ire is a synne on of þe gretteste of synnys	
Abomynable vnto þe god of heuene	
And to hym self it is distruxcioun	
This euery lewede veker or parsoun	2008
Kan seen how yre engenderyth homysyde	
Ire is in soth executour of pryde	
I coude of Ire sey so meche sorwe	
Myn tale schulde laste tyl to morwe	2012
And þerfore preye I god boþe day & nyȝt	
An yrous man god sende hym lityl myȝt	
It is gret harm & ek greet pete	
To sette an yrous man in heigh degre	2016
¶ Whylom þere was an yrous potestat	Of an Irous potestat /
As seyth Senek þat durynge his estat	
Vp-on a day out rydyn knyȝtis too	[leaf 238, back]
And as fortune wolde þat it were so	2020
That on of hem cam hom þat oper nouȝt	
A-non þe knyȝt by-fore þe Iuge is brouȝt	
That seyde þus þou hast þyn felawe slayn	
ffor which I deme þe to þe deth sertayn	2024

And to a-noþer knyzt comaundede he  
 Go lede hym to þe deth I charge þe  
 And happid as þey wente by þe weye  
 Toward þe place þere he schulde deye 2028  
 The knyzt cam which men wende he hadde be ded  
 Thanne thouzte þey it was þe beste red  
 To leede hem boþe to þe Iuge a-geyn  
 They seyde lord þe knyght ne hath not slayn 2032  
 His felawe here he stondyth hol a-loone  
 3e schul ben ded a-noon so mote I gone  
 That is to seyne boþe on & too & thre  
 And to þe ferste knyzt þus spak he 2036  
 I dampnede þe þu muste algatis be ded  
 And þou also muste nedys lese þyn hed  
 ffor þou art cause whi thyn felawe deyeth  
 And to þe thredde knyzt ryzt þus he seyeth 2040  
 Thow hast not don þat I comaundede þe  
 And þus he dede hem slen alle thre  
 Irous Cambises was ek dronkelewe  
 And ay delitede hym to ben a schrewe 2044  
 And so be-fel a lord of his meyne  
 That louede verteuos moralite  
 Seyde on a day be-twixe hem ryzt þus  
 A lord is lost zif he be vicious 2048  
 And dronkenes is ek a foul record  
 In any man & namely in a lord  
 There is ful manye an ye & manye an ere  
 A-waytynge on a lord & he not where 2052  
 ffor godys loue drynk more a-temperelly  
 Wyn makyth man to lesyn wrechedely  
 His mynde & hyse lymys euerychon  
 The reuers schal þou sen & þat a-non 2056  
 And preve it by thyn owene experyence [leaf 239]  
 That wyn ne doth to folk non swich offence  
 There is no wyn be-reuyth me myn myzt  
 Of hond ne foot ne of myn eye syzt 2060



And for despit he drank mekyl þe more  
 An hunderede part than he hadde don by-fore  
 And ryzt a-non þis yrous cursede wreche  
 Leet þis knyzt sone by-fore hym feche 2064  
 Comaundyng hym he schulde by-fore hym stonde  
 And sodeynly he tok his bowe on honde  
 And vp þe stryng he pullede to hyse ere  
 And with an arwe he slow þe child ryzt þere 2068  
 Now wheþer haue I sekyr hand or non  
 Quod he is al myn myzt & mynde a-gon  
 Hath wyn be-reuyd me myn eyen syth  
 What schulde I telle þe answeere of þe knyzt 2072  
 His sone was slaye þere is no more to seye  
 Beth war þerfore with lordys how 3e pleye  
 Syng placebo & I schal 3if i can  
 But 3if it be vnto a pore man 2076  
 To a pore man men schulde his vicis telle  
 But not to a lord þow he schulde go to helle  
 Lo yrous Cyrus thilke pereyen  
 How he distroyed þe Ryuer of Gyseen 2080  
 ffor þat an hors of his was drenkt þerinne  
 Whan þat he wente babylynye to wyne  
 He made þat þe ryuer was so smal  
 That women myghte wade it oueral 2084  
 Lo what seyde he þat so wel teche can  
 Ne be no felawe to an yrous man  
 Ne wyth no wood man walke by þe weye  
 Lest þe repente I wele no ferþere seye 2088  
 Now thomas leue broþer lef thyn yre  
 Th[o]u schalt me fynde as Iust as is a squire  
 Hold not þe deuyll knyf ay at þyn herte  
 Thyn angyr doth þe al to sore smerte 2092  
 But schewe to me al thyn confescioun  
 Nay quod þe syke man by seynt symoun  
 I haue be schryue this day at myn curat  
 I haue hym told al holy myn estat 2096

[leaf 239, back]



Nedith it no more to speke of it seyth he  
 But ȝif me lyste of myn humylite  
 ȝif me of ȝore gold to make oure cloystere  
 Quod he for manye a muskele & manye an oystere 2100  
 Whan opere men han ben ful weel at eyse  
 Hath ben oure fode oure Cloystere for to reyse  
 And ȝit god wot oneȝe þe fondement  
 Parformed is ne of oure pauement 2104  
 Nis not a tyl ȝit with-inne oure wonys  
 By god we owyn fourty pound for stonys  
 Now help tomays for hym þat harwede helle  
 Or ellis muste we oure bokys selle 2108  
 And ȝif ȝow lakke oure predicacioun  
 Thanne goth þe world al to distruccioun  
 ffor ho so from þis world wolde vs be-reue.  
 So god me saue thomas be ȝoure leue 2112  
 He wolde be-reue out of þis world þe sunne  
 ffor who can teche & werke as we cunne  
 And þat is not of lytyme quod he  
 But sithe þat elye was or elyse 2116  
 Han frerys ben þat fynde I of record  
 In charyte thanked be oure lord  
 Now Thomas help for seynte charyte  
 And doun a-non he sette hym on his kne 2120  
 This syke man wex ny wood for yre  
 He wolde þat þe frere hadde bee a-fyre  
 With his false dissymylacioun  
 Swych thyng as is in myn possessioun 2124  
 Quod he may I ȝeuyn & non oper  
 ȝe sey me þis how þat I am ȝoure broȝer  
 ȝa certis quod þe frere trostyth wel  
 I tok oure dame oure lettere with oure sel 2128  
 Now wel quod he & sumwhat schal I ȝeue  
 On to ȝoure holy couent whil I leue  
 And in þyn hand þou schalt it hald a-non  
 On þis condicioun & opere non 2132

That þou de-parte it so my derere broþer [leaf 240]  
 That euery frere haue as meeche as oper  
 This schalt þou swere on þyn professioun  
 With-oute fraude or cauelacyoun 2136  
 I swere it quod þe frere vp-on myn feith  
 And þerwithal his hand in his he leith  
 Lo here myn feyth in me schal ben no lak  
 Now put þanne þyn hand down by myn bak 2140  
 Seyde þis man & grope wel by-hynde  
 Be-nethe myn buttoke þere schat þ[o]u fynde  
 A thyng þat I haue hid in pryuyte  
 A thoute þis frere þat schal gon with me 2144  
 And down his hand he lau[n]chith to þe clyfte  
 In hope for to fynde þere a zifte  
 And whan þis syke man felte þis frere  
 Aboute his tewel grope þere & here 2148  
 A-myd his hand he let þe frere a fart  
 There nys no capil drawynge in a cart  
 That myȝt a lete a fart of swych a soun  
 The frere vp-stirte as doth a wood lyoun 2152  
 A false cherl he seyde for godys bonys  
 This hast þou for dispit don for þe nonys  
 þow shalt a-beye þis fart ȝif þat I may  
 His meyne þat herdyn þis a-fray 2156  
 Come lepynge in & cachede out þe frere  
 And forth he goth with a ful angery chere  
 And fette hese felawe þere as hadde his stor  
 Ho lokede as it were a wylde boor 2160  
 He grynt with his teth so was he wroth  
 A sturdy pas down to þe court he goth  
 Where as þere wonede a man of greet honour  
 To whom þat he was alwey confessour 2164  
 This worthi man was lord of þat village  
 This frere cam as he were in a rage  
 Where as þis lord sit etynge at his bord  
 O-neþe myȝte þe frere speke a word 2168

Tyl at þe laste he seyde god 3ow se  
 This lord gan to loke & seyde benedicite  
 What frere Ihn̄ what maner world is þis [leaf 240, back]  
 I se wel þat sumthyng þere is a-mys 2172  
 3e loke as thow þe wode were ful of thewys  
 Sit doun a-non & telle vs what 3oure gref is  
 And it schal ben a-mendyt If I may  
 I haue quod he had a dispit to day 2176  
 God 3ilde 3ow a-doun in 3oure village  
 That in þis world nys non so poure a page  
 That he nulde haue abomynacioun  
 Of þat I hare resseyuyd in 3oure toun 2180  
 And 3it me greuyth me no þyng so sore  
 As þat þis olde cherl with lokys hore  
 Blasfemyd hath oure holy couent ek  
 Now maystir quod þe lord I 3ow be-sek 2184  
 No maystyr quod he sire but seruytour  
 Thow I haue had in scole þat honour  
 God lykyth not þat rabi men vs calle  
 Neyþer in market nyn in 3oure large halle 2188  
 No fors quod he but telle me al 3oure gref  
 Syre quod þis frere an odyous myschef  
 þis day is betid to myn ordere & me  
 And so par concequens to eche degre 2192  
 Of holy cherche god a-mende it sone  
 Syre quod þe lord 3e wete what is to done  
 Distemperyth 3ow not 3e ben myn confessour  
 3e ben þe salt of þe cherche & þe sauour 2196  
 ffor godys loue 3oure pacience 3e holde  
 Telle me 3oure gref & he anon hym tolde  
 As 3e han herd be-fore 3e wete wel what  
 Te lady of þe hous ay stille sat 2200  
 Til sche hadde herd what þe frere seyde  
 Ey godis modyr quod sche blysfyl mayde  
 Is þere not elle telle me feythfully  
 Madame quod he how lykyth 3ow herby 2204

How þat me thynkyth quod sche so god me speede  
 I seye a cherl hap don a cherlis dede  
 What schulde I seye god lete hym neuere the  
 His syke hed is ful of vanyte 2208  
 I holde hym in a manere of frenesye [leaf 241]  
 Madame by god I schal not lye  
 But I on oper whise may ben wreke  
 I schal de-fame hym ouyral þere I speke 2212  
 This false blasfemour þat chargede me  
 To departe þat wele not departede be  
 What euery man I-lyche meche with myschaunce  
 The lord sat styлле as he were in a trance 2216  
 And in his herte he rollede vp & down  
 How hadde þis cherl þis ymaginacioun  
 To schewe þis probleme to a frere  
 Neuere erst er now herde I of swych matere 2220  
 I trowe þe deuyl put it in his mynde  
 In arsmatryk coude þere no man fynde  
 By-forn þis day swich a questyoun  
 Who schulde mak a demonstracioun 2224  
 That euery man schul haue I-lyche hise part  
 As of þe soun or sonour of a fart  
 O nyse proude cherl I-schrewe his face  
 Lo serys quod þe lord with harde grace 2228  
 Ho herde euere of swich a thyng er now  
 To euery man I-like telle me howe  
 It is an impossible it may not be  
 Ey nyce cherl god lete hym neuere the 2232  
 The rumbelyng of a fart & euery soun  
 Nys bot of eyr reuerberacioun  
 And euere it wastith lyte & lyte away  
 þere is no man can deme be myn fey 2236  
 3if þat it were departid equally  
 What lo myn cherl lo how schrewedely  
 Vp to myn confessour to day he spak  
 I holde hym certaynly demonyak 2240



Now ete 3oure mete & lete þe cherl go pleye  
 Let hym gon hangyn him selue a deuele wey

[*The Solution of the "Problems" by the Lord's Squire-  
 and-Carver. No break in the MS.*]

Now stod þe lordys squyer at þe bord  
 That karf his mete & herde word be word 2244  
 Of alle thynges whiche I haue 3ow sayd  
 Myn lord *quod* he be 3e not euele a-payd.  
 I coude telle for a gounne cloth [leaf 241, back]  
 To 3ow sere frere be so 3e ben not wroth 2248  
 How þat þis fart schulde euene delid þe  
 A-mong 3oure couent 3if it lyke me  
 Telle *quod* þe lord & þou schat haue a-non  
 A gounne cloth by god & be seynt Iohn 2252  
 Myn lord *quod* he whan þat þe wedir is fayr  
 With-oute wynd or parturbynges of eyr  
 Lat brynge a carte whel here / in to þis halle  
 But loke þat it haue hyse spokys alle 2256  
 Twelue spokys hath a carte whel trowe I  
 And brynge me þanne twelve frerys wet 3e why  
 ffor trettene is a couent as I gesse  
 The confessour here for his worthynesse 2260  
 Schal parforme vp þe nombre of his couent  
 Thanne schul þey knele don be on asent  
 And to euery spokys ende in his manere  
 fful sadly leye his nose schal a frere 2264  
 3oure nobele confessour þere god hym saue  
 Schal holde his nose vpryght vndyr þe naue  
 Thanne schal þis cherl with bely sterne & stout  
 As ony tabour ben hedyr brought out<sup>1</sup> [1 out: later]  
 And sette hym on þe whil ryȝt off þis carte 2269  
 Vp-on þe naue & make hym lete a farte  
 And 3e schuln seen vp peryl of myn lyf  
 By þe pref which þat is demo[n]stratyf 2272



That equally þe soun of it wele wende  
 And ek þe stynk vnto þe spokys ende  
 Saue þat þis worthy man þis confessour  
 By cause he is a man of gret honour 2276  
 Schal han þe ferste freut as worthy is  
 And as þe nobele vsage ȝit of frerys is  
 The worthy men of hem schul first be servid  
 And serteynly he hath it wel deseruyd 2280  
 He hath to day tauȝt vs so meche good  
 With prechyng in þe pulpit þere he stod  
 That I may vouche saf I sey for me 2283  
 He hadde þe ferste smel of fartys thre [Gg. 4. 27 stops]  
 [And so wolde aȝ/ his/ couent/ hardeli. [Harl. 1759, leaf 113, back]  
 He berith hym so faire & holili.  
 The Lorde the Ladie & euery man saf the ffrere.  
 Seiden that/ Iankyn spak/ weȝ in this/ matere. 2288  
 As/ weȝ/ as/ Ouyde or Ptholome.  
 Touchyng/ the cherle thei seide that/ subtilite.  
 And hye witte made hym speke as/ he spak/.  
 He is/ no fooȝ/ ne no demonyak/. 2292  
 And Iankyn hath wonne a newe gowne.  
 Mi tale is/ done we ben almost at/ towne.  
 Here/ endith the/ Sompnours/ tale/.] [Harl. 1758 extract ends]

## GROUP E. FRAGMENT VI.

### § 1. THE CLERK'S HEAD-LINK.

#### CAMBRIDGE MS.

[Leaves 242 and 243 (containing the Clerk's Head-Link, the painting of him, and the first 8 stanzas of the Tale) are cut out.]

[Here begynneþe þe Prologe of/ þe Clerk/ of Oxenford]

[Sir Clerk/ of Oxenford oure Oste sayd [Sloane 1685, leaf  
129, back]  
S Ye ride as styлле as Coy as dothe a mayde  
Were newe spoused sittynge at þe borde

þis day ne herd/ I of youre mouthe a worde 4

I trowe þat 3e study a-boute soȝne sophyme

But salamon saithe alle þenge hathe tyme

ffor goddes sake bethe of better/ chere

hit ys no tyme nowe to study here 8

Telle vs soȝn mery tale by your fay

ffor what man ys entred in to a play

he nedes mote into þat play assent

But precheth not as freres done in lent 12

To make us for oure olde synnes to wepe

Ne þat þi Tale ne make vs not to slepe

Telle vs some mery þenge of auentes

3oure termes your' figoures and your' coloures 16

kepe hem in store tyl so be 3e hem endite

hie3e style as when men to kynges wryte

Spekethe so playne at þis tyme I you pray [leaf 130]

þat we may vndirstonde what 3e say 20

This worþi Clerke benyngely vnswared

Oste quod he I am vnder your/ 3erde

3e haue as nowe of vs þe Gouvernaunce

And þerfore wolle I do 3owe now obeysaunce 24

20 CAMBRIDGE 235 (6-T. 403) [this page, Sloane 1685]

As fer as reson askethe hardely [Sloane 1685, on leaf 130]  
 I wille you telle a tale whiche þat I  
 lerned at Padow/ of a worþi clerke  
 As prouyd by hys wordes and his werk/ 28  
 he ys nowe dede and nailid in his chest  
 I pray to god to sende his saul gode reste  
 Fraunceys petrak' þe laureol poet  
 hiȝt/ þis Clerk' whos rethorik/ swete 32  
 Illumyeth alle Italy þurgh poetrye  
 As lynean dyd of philosophi ·  
 Or lawe or opere art particuler  
 But dethe þat wolle suffre no þinge here 36  
 But as hit were twynkelynge of an eye  
 Bothe hathe he slayne and alle shalle we deye  
 But for to tellen of þis worthi man  
 þat taught me þis tale as I first be-gan 40  
 I sey þat he first *with* hiȝe stile enditethe  
 Or he þe body of his tale writeth  
 A *prochem* in þe whiche desernethe he  
 The Mounde & of Saluce þe contre 44  
 And spekethe of appeneñ þe hilles hie  
 þat bene þe boundes · of west lombardye  
 And of Mounte resulus in special  
 where as þe Pope out of a welle smal 48  
 Takith his first spryngynge and his sours  
 Where as he holte þe euen streight way his cours  
 To enel ward to Ferrar' & to venyse  
 The whiche a longe þenge were to devise 52  
 And truly as to my Iugement  
 Me thyнке hit a thinge impertinent/  
 Saue he wolle conueye his matere [leaf 130, back]  
 But this is þe tale whiche þat ȝe shulle here 56

Here endeth þe Prologe

[Sloane 1685, on leaf 130, back.]

[No gaps between the stanzas in the MS.]

## &amp; here be-gynneth þe Tale

- T**here ys at þe weste syde of Itayle 57  
 Doun at þe root of vesulus þe cold  
 A lusty playne habundaunt of vitayle  
 Where many a Touñ þou mayste be-holde 60  
 þat founded were in tyme of eldres old  
 And many an oþer/ delectable siȝt/  
 And Saluce þis noble cuntre hiȝt 63
- ¶ A marquis whilom was in þat londe 64  
 As were his worþi eldres hym be-fore  
 And obeisaunt and redy to his honde  
 Were alle his legees bothe lesse & more 67  
 Thus in delyte he lyued and hath done ȝore  
 By-loued and drad þurgh fauoure & fortune  
 Bothe of his lordes and of his comune 70
- // þere with he was as to speke of lynage 71  
 þe gentelest/ yborne of alle lumbardy  
 A fayre person and stronge and yonge of age  
 And fulle of honour/ and curtesye 74  
 discrete y-nouȝe his contrey for to guye  
 Saue in some thenges he was to blame  
 And Walter was þis yonge lordes name 77
- ¶ I blame hym þus þat he considerith nouȝt/ 78  
 In tyme comynge what myȝt be-tyde  
 But on his luste present was alle his þouȝt  
 And forto hauke and hunte on euery syde 81  
 Wele nyeȝ alle opere cures let he slyde  
 And eke he ne wolde þat was worste of alle  
 Wedde no wyf for ouȝte þat myȝt be-falle 84

As fer as reson askethe hardely [Sloane 1685, on leaf 130]  
 I wille you telle a tale whiche þat I  
 lerned at Padow/ of a worpi clerke  
 As prouyd by hys wordes and his werk/ 28  
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 I sey þat he first *with* hize stile enditethe  
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 And truly as to my Iugement  
 Me thynke hit a thinge impertinent/  
 Saue he wolfe conueye his matere [leaf 130, back]  
 But this is þe tale whiche þat 3e shulle here 56

Here endeth þe Prologe



[Sloane 1685, on leaf 130, back.]

[No gaps between the stanzas in the MS.]

## &amp; here be-gynneth þe Tale

- T**here ys at þe weste syde of Itayle 57  
 Doun at þe root of vesulus þe cold  
 A lusty playne habundaunt of vitayle  
 Where many a Touñ þou mayste be-holde 60  
 þat founded were in tyme of eldres old  
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- ¶ A marquis whilom was in þat londe 64  
 As were his worþi eldres hym be-fore  
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 In tyme comynge what myȝt be-tyde  
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 And forto hauke and hunte on euery syde 81  
 Wele nyeȝ alle opere cures let he slyde  
 And eke he ne wolde þat was worste of alle  
 Wedde no wyf for ouȝte þat myȝt be-falle 84

Only þat poynt his peple bare so sore	[Sloane 1685, on leaf 130, back]	85
þat flok/ mele on a day þei went		
[And oon of hem that wisest was of lore.	[Harl. MS 1758, leaf 114, back]	
Or ellis that the lorde wolde best/ assent.]		88
þat he shulde telle hym what his peple ment		
Or elles coude he wele shewe suche mater		
he to þe Marquis sayd as 3e shulle here		91
O noble Marquis your' humanyte	[leaf 131]	92
Assuresse vs and 3eue vs hardynesse		
As ofte tyme as hit ys necessite		
þat we you mowe telle oure heuynesse		95
Accepteth lord/ of youre gentilnesse		
þat we to you with pitous hert compleyne		
And let youre Eres nouȝt my voyce disdeyne		98
Alle haue I nouȝt/ to done in þis matere		99
None þan an other hathe in þis place		
ȝit for asmoche as 3e my lord so dere		
haue alway shewed fauoure & grace		102
I. dare þe better/ aske of you a space		
Of audience to shewen oure request/		
And 3e my lord to done riȝt as you lust		105
ffor certes lord so wele vs lyketh you		106
And alle youre werkes and euere haue doñ þat we		
Ne coude not oure owen self devisen howe		
we myȝt more lyf/ in felicite		109
Safe oñ þenge lord yf hit youre wille be		
þat for to be a wedded man ȝif þou lyst		
þan were youre pepul in soueren hertes rest/	[Sloane 1685 extract ends]	
Bowith 3oure nekke / vndyr þe blysful ȝok	[Cambr. Univ. Lib. MS Gg. 4. 27, leaf 244]	
Of souereynthe / & not of seruyse		
Which þat men clepe / sponsayle or wedlok		
And thynkith lord / a-mong 3oure thouȝtys wyse		116

How þat oure dayis / passe in sundery wyse  
 ffor thow we slepe / or wake or rome or ryde  
 Ay fleth þe tyme / it nyl no man a-byde 119

And þow 3oure / grene thouȝt floure as ȝit 120  
 In crepith age / al-wey as styлле as ston  
 And deth manasith / euery age & smyt  
 In eche estat / for þere escapith noon 123  
 And also serteyn / as we knowyn echon  
 That we schal deye / as vncerteyn with alle  
 Been of þat day / whan deth schal on vs falle 126

Acceptyth þanne / of vs þe trewe entent 127  
 That neuere ȝit / refusedyn þyn heste  
 And we wele lord / ȝif þat ȝe wele assent  
 Chese ȝow a wyf / in schort tyme at þe leste 130  
 Born of þe / gentilleste & of þe meste  
 Of al þis lond / so þat it oȝhte seene  
 Honour to god / & ȝow as we can deme 133

Delyuere vs / out of al þis bosy drede 134  
 And tak a wif for hyghe godis sake  
 ffor ȝif it / so be-fel as god forbede  
 That þorw ȝoure deth ȝoure lyf schulde slake 137  
 And þat a straunge successour schulde take  
 ȝoure erytage o wo were vs on lyue  
 Wherfore we prey ȝow hastily to wyue 140

Hire meke preyere & here pitous chire 141  
 Made þe Markis herte to haue pytee  
 ȝe wele *quod* he myn owene peple dere  
 To þat I neuere erst thouȝte to streyne me 144  
 I me reioursede of myn libertee  
 That selde tyme is founde in maryage  
 There I was fre I mote been in seruage 147

But na the les I se 3oure trewe entent	[leaf 244, back]
And truste vp-on 3oure wit & han don ay	
Werfore of myn fre wil I wele assente	
To wedde me as sone as euere I may	151
But þere as 3e han proferede me to day	
To chese me a wyf I 3ow relese	
That choys & prey 3ow of þat profere sese	154
Let me a-lone In chesyng of myn wyf	162
That charge vp-on myn bak I wele endure	
But I 3ow preye & charge vp-on 3oure lyf	
What wyf þat I take I 3ow ensure	165
To worschepe hire whil þat hyre lyf may dure	
In word & werk bothe here & ellis where	
As sche an emperourys douȝtir were	168
ffor god it wot þat childeryn oftyn been	155
Vnlyk here worthy elders hem be-fore	
Bounte comyth of god / nat of þe treen	
Of whiche þey been engenderede & I-bore	158
I truste in goddis bounte & þefore	
Myn maryage & myn estat & resste	
I hym be-take / he may don as hym leste	161
And ferþere more þis schal 3e swere þat 3e	169
A-geyn myn choys schul neyþer groche ne striue	
ffor sythe I schal for-gon myn lyberte	
At 3oure request as euere mote i thryue	172
There as myn herte is set þere wele I wyue	
And but 3e wele asente in swych manere	
I prey 3ow spekyth no mor of þis mateere	175
With hertely wil þey swore & a-sentyn	176
To al þis thyng þere sey no wigh nay	
Be-sekyng hym of grace er þat þey wente	
That he wolde grauntyn hem a serteyn day	179

Of his sponsaile as sone as euere he may ffor ȝit alwey þe puple sumwhat dredde Lest þat þe markes no wyf wolde wedde	182
He grauntede hem a day swych as hym leste	[leaf 245] 183
On which he wolde be weddit sekyrly And seyde he dede al þis at his requeste And þey with humble entent buxsomly	186
Knelynge vp-on hire kneis ful reuerently Hym thankede alle & þus þey han an ende Of hire entent & hom a-geyn þey wende	189
And here vp on he to hise offyserys Comaundith for þe feste to purueye And to hyse priue knyȝtis & squerys Swich chargē ȝaf as hym leste on hem lye	190 193
And þey to hise comandementis obeye And ech <sup>1</sup> of hem doth al his dilygence To don vn-to þe feste reuerence	[ <sup>1</sup> In a later hand over an erasure.] 196

## [PART II.]

[N <sup>2</sup> ]Oght fer from thilke paleys honourable Where as þis Markys / schop his maryage Ther was a thorpt of sighte delytable In which þat poore folk of þat village Haddyn here bestis & here herbergage And of hire labour tok here sustenaunce Aftyr þat þe erþe / ȝaf hem habundaunce	[ <sup>2</sup> A space has been left in the MS for this letter.] 200 203
A-mongys þese poore / folk þere dwellede a man Whiche þat was holde / poreste of hem alle But highe god / sumtyme sende can His grace in-to / a lytyl oysis stalle Ianicula / men of þat thorp hym calle A doughtyr he hadde / fayr & ȝyng to syȝte And Grysilde / þis ȝyng maydyn hyȝte	204 207 [ <sup>3</sup> In a later hand.] grisild <sup>3</sup>



But for to speke / of verteuous beute	211
Thanne was sche on / þe fayreste vndyr sunne	
ffor pourely / I-fosterede vp was sche	
No lykerous lust / was thorw hire herte I-ronne	214
Weel oftere of / þe welle þan of þe tunne	
Sche drank & for / sche wolde vertu plesse	
Sche knew wel labour / but non ydyl ese	217
But thow þis mayd / tendere was of age	[leaf 245, back] 218
ȝit in þe 'in here chaste virginite'	[1—1 later]
There was enclosede rype & sad corage	
And in gret / reuerence & charyte	221
Hyre olde pore / fadyr fosterede sche	
A fewe schep / spynnynge on feld sche kepte	
Sche wolde not / ben ydyl tyl sche slepte	224
And whan sche homward / cam sche wolde brynge	225
Wortis or opere / erbis tymys ofte	
The whiche sche dalf / & sette for hyre lyuynge	
And made hyre bed / ful harde & nothyng softe	228
And ay sche kepte hyre faderys lyf on lofte	
With euery obeysaunce & dyligence	
That child may don to / faders reuerence	231
Vp-on Grysilde / þis pore creature	232
fful ofte tyme / þis Markis sette his eye	
As he an huntyng / rod paraenture	
And whan it fel / þat he myȝte hire espye	235
He not with wauntoun / lokyng of folye	
His eyen cast on / here / but in sad wyse	
Vp-on hire cher / he wolde hym ofte a-vyse	238
Comendynge in his / herte / hire womanhede	239
And ek hire verteus / passynge ony wyght	
Of so ȝyng age / as wel in chere as dede	
ffor thogh þe puple / hath no gret ensyȝt	242

In vertu he / consyderede ful ryzt  
 Hire bou[n]teis / & purposede þat he wolde  
 Wedde hire only / 3if þat he wedde schulde 245

The day of weddyng / cam but no wight kan 246  
 Telle what / woman þat it schulde be  
 ffor whiche merueyle / wonderede manye a man  
 And seydyn whan þat / þey were in prynyte 249  
 Wele not oure lord / 3it leue his vanyte  
 Wele he not wedde / allas allas þe whyle  
 Whi wele he þus hym self & vs begyle 252

But natheles þis Markis hath don make [leaf 246] 253  
 Of gounnys set / in gold & in asure  
 Brochis & ryngis / for gresildis sa'te  
 And of hire clothyng / tok he þe mesure 256  
 By a maydyn / lyk to hyr stature  
 And ek of opere / aornementis alle  
 That on to swich / a weddyng schulde falle 259

The tyme of vnderne / of þe soneday 260  
 Aprochith that / þis weddyng schulde bee  
 And al þe paleys / put was In aray  
 Bothe halle & chaumberys / eche in hese degre 263  
 Housis of offysis / stuffed with gret plente  
 There mayst þou sen / of deynteuous vitayle  
 That may be founde / as fer as last ytaylle 266

This riche Markis / ryally arayed 267  
 Lordis & ladiis in his cumpaynye  
 The whech to þe / feste were I-preyed  
 And of his / retente þe bacherye 270  
 And manye a soun / of sundery melodye  
 Vn-to þe village / of þe whiche I tolde  
 In þis aray / þe ryzte weye han holde 273

Gresylde of þis / god wot ful Innocent 274  
 That for hire schapyn / was al þis aray  
 To feche watyr / at a welle is went  
 And comyth hom / as sone as euere sche may 277  
 ffor wel sche hadde / herd seyð þat ilke day  
 The Markys schulde / wedde & ȝif sche myȝt  
 Sche wolde fayn / a seyn sum of þat syȝte 280

Sche thouȝte sche wolde / with opere maydenys stonde 281  
 That been myne felas / in oure dore & see  
 The Mayrkysesse / & þefore wele I fonde  
 To doon at hom / as sone as it may bee 284  
 The labour which / þat longith on to me  
 And þanne I may / at / leysere hire byholde  
 ȝif sche this weye / vn-to þe castel holde 287

And as sche wolde / ouyr hyre throswald gon [leaf 246, back]  
 The Markis cam / and gan hyre for to calle  
 And sche sette down / hyre watyr pot a-non  
 By syde þe throschewald / in an oxis stalle 291  
 And doun vp-on hyre / kneis sche gan to falle  
 And with sad cuntenaunce / knelede styлле  
 Til sche hadde / herd þe lordis wille 294

This thoghtful Markys / spak vn-to þis mayde 295  
 fful sobirly / & seyth / in þis manere  
 Where is ȝoure fadyr / O Grysild he seyde  
 And sche with reuerence / In humble chere 298  
 Answerde lord / he is al redy here  
 And in sche goth / sche <sup>1</sup>wolde no lengere lette<sup>1</sup> [1--<sup>1</sup>Written  
 over an era-  
 sure in a  
 later hand.]  
 And to þe Markis / sche hyre fadyr fette

He by the hond / thanne tok þis olde man 302  
 And seyde þus / whan he hym hadde a syde  
 Ianicula / I neyþer may ne kan  
 Lengere þe plesaunce / of myn herte hyde 305

3if þat þou vouche saf/ what so be-tyde

Thyn douȝtyr wele I / take <sup>1</sup>er þan I wende<sup>1</sup> [<sup>1</sup>] Written over  
an erasure in a  
later hand.]

As for myn wif / vn-to myn lyuys ende

Thow louyst me / I wot it wel serteyn 309

And art myn feythful / lyge man I-bore

And al þat lykyth me / I dare wel seyn

It lykyth þe / & specially þerfore 312

Tel me þat poynt / þat I haue seyde be-fore

3if that þou wilt / vnto þat purpos drawe

To take me / as for þyn sone in lawe 315

The sodeyn cas / þis man a-stonede so 316

That red he wex / a-bayst & al quakyng

He stod oneþe / seyde he wordys moo

But only this / lord quod he myn willyng 319

Is as 3e wele / ne a-3ens 3oure lykyng

I wele no thyng / 3e be myn lord so dere

Ryght as 3ow lyst / gouernyth þis matyere 322

That wel I wot / quod / þis Markis softlyt [leaf 24:] 323

That in thy chambir / I & þou & sche

Haue a colacioun / & wyst þou whi

ffor I wele aske 3if it hire wille be 326

To be myn wif / & rewele hyr after me

And al þis schal been don / in þyn presence

I wele not speke / out of þyn audience 329

And in þe chambere / whil þey were a-boute 330

This tretys which / þat 3e schul after here

The puple cam / vnto þe hous with-oute

And wondere hem / in how oneste manere 333

And tentyfli sche / kepte hire fadyr dere

But outyrly / Grisildis wondere myghte

ffor neuere erst / ne saw sche swich a syghte 336

No wondir ist / þow þat sche were a-stonyd	337
To seen so greet / a geste come in-to plase	
Sche neuere was / to swich a geste wonyd	
ffor whiche sche lokede / with ful pale face	340
But schortly þis / matyer for to chase	
These are þe wordis / þat þe Markis sayde	
To þis benynge / veray fey[t]hful mayde	343
Grysilde he seyde / 3e schul wel vndyrstonde	344
It lykyt to 3oure / fadyr & to me	
That I 3ow wedde / & ek it may so stonde	
As I suppose / 3e wele þat it so be	347
But þese demaundis / aske I ferst <i>quod</i> he	
That sythe it schal / been don in hasty wyse	
Wele 3e assentyn / or ellis 3ow auyse	350
I seye þis be 3e / redy with good herte	351
To al myn lust / & þat I frely may	
As me best lykyth / do 3ow lauhe or smerte	
And neuere 3e / to groche it nyght ne day	354
And ek whan I seye 3a / ne seye not nay	
Neyther be word / ne frounnynge cuntenaunce	
Swere þis / & here I swere oure allyaunce	357
Wonderynge vp-on þis word quakyng for drede [leaf 247, bk]	
Sche seyde lord / vndyng & vn-worthy	
I am to thilke honour þat 3e me beede	
But as 3e wele 3oure self ryȝt so wele I	361
And here I swere / þat neuere wyllyngly	
In werk ne thouȝt I nyl 3ow disobeye	
ffo[r] to be ded thow me were loth to dye	364
T[h]is is I-nogh Grysilde myn <i>quod</i> he	365
And forth he goth with a ful noble cheere	
Out at þe dore & after þat cam <sup>2</sup> sche	[ <sup>2</sup> cam : later, over an erasure.]
And to þe puple he seyde in þis manere	
	368



This is myn wif / quod he þat standyth heere  
 Honoureth hire / & louth hire I preye  
 Who so me louth þere is no more to seye 371

And for þat nothyng / of hire olde gere 372  
 Sche schulde brynge in-to his hous he bad  
 That women schulde dispoylyn hire ryȝt þere  
 Of whiche þese / ladyis were not ryȝt glad 375  
 To handele hire clothis / wherIn sche was clad  
 But natheles þis mayde bryȝt of hewe  
 ffrom foot to heed they cloþede han al newe 378

Hyre heris han þey kembit that lay vntrussede 379  
 fful rudely & with here fyngerys smale  
 A coroun on hire heed þey han dressyd  
 And set hire ful of nouchis grete & smale 382  
 Of hire a-ray what schulde I make a tale  
 Oneþe þe puple hire knew for hire fayrnesse  
 Whan sche translatede was in swich rychesse 385

This Markis hath hire spousede with a ryng 386  
 Brouȝt for þe same cause & þanne hire sette  
 Vp-on an hors snow whit & wel amblenge  
 And to his paleys he wolde no lengere lette 389  
 With Ioyful puple þat hire ledde & mette  
 Conueyede hire & þus þe day þey spende  
 In reuel tyl þe sonne gan descende 392

And shortely forth þis tale for to chace [leaf 248] 393  
 I seye þat to þis / newe Markysesse  
 God hath swych fauour sent hire of his grace  
 That it semede not bi liklynesse 396  
 That sche was born & fed in rewedenesse  
 As in a Cotè / or in an oxis stalle  
 But norchede in / an emperourys halle 399

- To euery wight sche wexen is so dere 400  
 And worchepeful / þat folk þere sche was bore  
 And from hyre burthe knew hire ȝer be ȝere  
 Oneþe trowede þey but durste a swore 403  
 That to Ianykele of which I spak be-fore  
 Sche doghtir were / for as be coniecture  
 Hem thouȝte sche was a-noper cryature 406
- ffor thow þat euere / verteuous was sche 407  
 Sche was encresede in swych excellence  
 Of thewys goode / I-set in high bounte  
 And so discret & fayr of eloquense 410  
 So benyngne & so dygne of reuerence  
 And coude so þe puples herte embrace  
 That eche hire louede þat lokede in hire face 413
- Not only of Saluces in þe toun 414  
 Publischid was þe bounte of hyre name  
 But ek be-sydyn in manye a regioun  
 ȝif ony seyde wel a-noper seyde þe same 417  
 So spradde of hire / high bounte þe fame  
 That men & women as wel ȝynge as olde  
 Com to saluce / vp-on hire to be-holde 420
- This Water lowely nay but roially 421  
 Weddede with fortunat oneste  
 In godis pes leuyth / ful honestely  
 At hom / & outwar / grace I-nogh haþ he 424  
 And for he saw þat vndyr low degre  
 Was ofte vertu hid / þe peple hym hilde  
 A prudent man / & þat is seyn ful seelde 427
- Not only this Grisylidis thourgh hire wit [leaf 248, back] 428  
 Koude al þe fet of wyfly humbilnesse  
 But ek whan þe cas / requyrede it  
 The comune profyt coude sche redresse 431

There nas discord rancure ne heuynesse  
 In al þat lond þat sche ne coude a-pese  
 And wysely brynge hem in reste & ese 434  
  
 Thow þat hire husbonde / absent were a-non 435  
 3if gentyl men or opere of hire cuntre  
 Were wroth sche wolde / brynge hem at oon  
 So wyse & rype wordis hadde she 438  
 And Iugementis of so gret equite  
 þat sche from heuene sent as men wende  
 Puple to saue & opere men tamende 441  
  
 Not longe tyme after þat þis gresylde 442  
 Was I-weddit sche a doughtyr hath I-bore  
 Al hadde sche leuere a born a knaue chyld  
 Glad was þe markis & þe folk þefore 445  
 ffor thow a mayde chyld cam al by-fore  
 Sche may vn-to a knauechild a-teyne  
 By liklyhed syn sche nys nat bareyne 448

## [PART III.]

Ther fel as it bi-fel tymys mo 449  
 Whan þat þis child hath soukede but a throwe  
 This markis in his herte longith soq  
 To tempte his wyf hire sadnesse for to knowe 452  
 That he ne my3te out of his herte throwe  
 This meruelious desyr his wyf tasayee  
 Nedles god wot he thou3te hyre for taffraye 455  
  
 He hadde a-sayed hire ry3t I-now be-fore 456  
 And fond hire eeuere good / what neded it  
 Hire for to tempte alwey more & more  
 Thow sum men preyse it for a subtil wit 459  
 But as for me I seye þat yuele it sit  
 Tassaye a wyf / whan þat it is noon nede  
 And put hire in angys & in drede 462

- ffor which þis Markys / wrowt in þis manere [leaf 249] 463  
 He cam alone / a nyȝt þere as sche lay  
 With sterne face / & with ful sturdy chere  
 And seyð thus / Grisilde quod he þat day 466  
 That I ȝow tok / out of ȝoure pore aray  
 And put ȝow in estat / of hegh noblesse  
 ȝe han not þat / forgetyn as I gesse 469
- I sey Grisilde / this present dignete 470  
 In which þat I haue / put ȝow / as I trowe  
 Makyth ȝow nat / forgetful for to be  
 þat I ȝow tok / in pore estaat ful lowe 473  
 ffor ony wele / ȝe motyn ȝoure seluyn knowe  
 Take heed of / euery word þat I ȝow seye  
 Ther is no wight / þat hereth it but we tweye 476
- Ye woot youre self wel / how that ye cam heere 477  
 In-to this hous / it is nat longe a-go  
 And thow to me / þat ye been lef & deere  
 Vn-to myn sentens ye been nothyng so 480  
 They seyn to hem / it is greet schame & wo  
 ffor to been subiect / & been in seruage  
 To the þat born art / of a smal village 483
- And nameliche / sithe thyn doughtyr was bore 484  
 These wordis han / they spoke douteles  
 But I desire / as I haue doon by-fore  
 To lyue myn lyf / with hem in reste & pees 487  
 I may nat in / this cas been rechelees  
 I mot doon with thyn / doghtyr for the beste  
 Nat as I wolde / but as myn peple leste 490
- And ȝit god wot / it is ful looghȝt to me 491  
 But natheles / with-outyn ȝoure wytynge  
 I wol not don / but this wol I quod he  
 That ȝe to me / assente as in this thyng 494

Schewe now þoure / pacience in þoure werkyng  
 That ȝe me hyȝte / & swore in þoure wyllage  
 That day that maked / was oure mariage 497

Whan sche hadde herd al this she noght a-meued [leaf 249, bk]  
 Neythir in word / ne chire nor cuntenaunce  
 for as it semede sche was nat agreuyd  
 Sche seyde lord al lyth in ȝore plesaunce 501  
 Myn chyld & .I. / with hertely obey-saunce  
 Been ȝourys al & ȝe mowe saue or spille  
 Youre owene thyng werkyth after ȝoure wyлле 504

There may no thyng god so myn soule saue 505  
 Lykyn ȝow þat may displesyn me  
 Ne I desyre nothyng for to haue  
 Ne drede for to lese saue only thee 508  
 T[h]is wil is in myn herte & ay schal bee  
 No lenthe of tyme or deth schal this defase  
 Ne change myn corage tyl a-noþer place 511

Glad was this markis of this answeyng 512  
 But ȝit he feynede as it were nat so  
 Al drery was hise chir & hise lokynge  
 Whan þat he schulde out of the chambir goo 515  
 Sone after this a furlong woy or too  
 He pryuyly hath told al his entente  
 Vn-to a man & to his wif hym sente 518

A maner seriaunt was this priue man 519  
 The whiche that fei[t]hful ofte he foundyn hadde  
 In thyngis grete & ek swiche folk wel kan  
 Doon executioun / in thyngis hadde 523  
 The lord knew wel that he hym louede & dradde  
 And whan this sergeaunt / wiste this lordis wille  
 In-to þe chaumbre / he stalke hym ful styлле 525



Madame he seyde ȝe mote for-ȝeue it me	526
Thow I do thyng to whiche I am constreynyd	
Ye ben so wis that ful weel knewe ȝe	
That lordis hestys mowe not been I-feynyd	529
They moun been weel bewailyd & compleynyd	
But men mot nede vntyl his lust obeye	
And so wele I / þere is no more to seye	532
This child I am comaundit for to take	[leaf 250] 533
And speke no more but out the child he hente	
Dispitously & gan a chire make	
As they he wolde a slayn it er he wente	536
Grysyldis muste / al suffere & al consente	
And as a lomb sche sittyth meke & styлле	
And leet this crewel seriaunt don his wille	539
Suspecious was / þe/ diffame of this man	540
Suspect his face / suspect his word also	
Suspect the tyme / in which that this be-gan	
Allas hire doghtyr that sche louede so	543
Sche wende he wolde a slayn it ryght tho	
But natheles sche neyther wept ne sikyd	
Conformyng hire to that þe markis lykyd	546
But at the laste spekyn sche be-gan	547
And mekely sche to the seriaunt preyde	
So as he was a worthi gentil man	
That sche muste kysse hire child er þat it deyede	550
And on hire barm this lytyl child sche leyde	
With ful sad face & gan the child to blysse	
And lullede it & after gan it to kysse	553
And thus sche seyde in ful benyngne voys	554
ffare wel myn child I schal þe neuere se	
But sythe I the haue markede with the croys	
Of thilke fadyr blyssede mote he bee	557

That for vs deyede vp-on a coroyes of tree  
 Thyn soule lytyl chyld I the be-take  
 ffor this nyȝt schat þou deye for myn sake 560

I trowe that to a norys in this cas 561  
 It hadde been hard / this routhe for to see  
 Weel myghte a modyr / þanne han cryede allas  
 But nathelas / sad / & stedefast was sche 564  
 That sche endurede / al aduercite  
 And to þe sergeaunt / mekelyche sayde  
 Haue here agayn / ȝoure ȝynge lite mayde 567

Seth now quod sche & doth myn lordis heste [leaf 250, back]  
 But on thyng wele I preye ȝow of ȝoure grace  
 That but myn lord forbad ȝow at the leste  
 Berieth this lite bodi in sum place 571  
 That bestis ne non opere briddis it to-race  
 But he no word wolde to þat purpos seye  
 But tok the child & wente vp-on hise weye 574

This sergeant cam vn-to his lord a-geyn 575  
 And of grysildis wordis & hire chere  
 He told hym word in schort pleyn  
 And hym presentyth with his doughtyr dere 578  
 Sumwhat this lord hadde routhe in this manere  
 But natheles his purpos held he styлле  
 As lordys doon whan they welen han here wille 581

And bad this segeaunt þat he priuily 582  
 Schulde this chyld softe wynde & wrappe  
 With alle cyrcumstauncis tenderly  
 And carye it in a cofere or in a lappe 585  
 But vp peyne of his hed of for to swappe  
 That no man schulde knowe of his entente  
 Ne whens he cam ne wheper þat he wente 588

But at boloyne he to his sustyr deere	589
That thilke tyme of pavyk was cuntesse	
He schulde it take & schewe hire this matyere	
Bysekyng hire to don hyre bysynesse	592
This child to fostere in al gentillesse	
And whos chyld þat it was he bad hire hyde	
ffrom euery wyght for ought þat may be-tyde	595
This sergeaunt goth & hath ful-fyld this thyng	596
But to the markis now roterne we	
ffor now goth he ful faste ymaginyng	
ȝif by his wywis cheer he myghte se	599
Or by hire word aperceyue that sche	
Were chaungede but he neuere hire coude fynde	
But euere in on I-lyke sadde & kynde	602
As glad as humble as besy in seruyse	[leaf 251] 603
And ek in loue as sche was wone to be	
Was sche to hym in euery manere wyse	
Nor of hire doughtyr nouȝt a word spak she	606
Non accident for noon aduersite	
Was seyn in hire / ne neuere hire doughtiris name	
Ne nemenede sche in ernest nor in game	609

## [PART IV.]

In this estaat there passede been foure ȝeer	610
Er sche with childe was but as god wolde	
A knaue child be this Waltyr	
fful gracious & fayr for to be-holde	613
And whan that folk it to his fadyr tolde	
Not only he but al his court merye	
Was for this child & god þey thankede & herye	616
Whan it was two ȝeer old & fro þe brest	617
Departede of his norysce on a day	
This Markis caughte ȝet a-nothir best	

To tempte his wyf ȝit oftere ȝif he may 620

O needeles was sche temptid in assay

But weddede men ne knowe no mesure

Whan that þey fynde a pacient creature 623

Wyf quod this Markys ȝe han herd er this 624

Myn peple beryth hevye oure maryage

And namely sithe myn sone I-born is

Now is it werse than euere in al oure age 627

The murmur sleth myn herte & myn corage

ffor to mynne eris comyth the vois so smerte

That it wel nygh destroyed hath myn herte 630

Now sey they thus now Waltyr is a-goon 631

Than schal the blood of Ianicle succede

And been oure lord / for opere haue we non

Swich wordis seigh myn peple out of drede 634

Weel oughte I of swich murmour takyn heede

ffor certeynly I drede swich sentence

Thogh they not pleynly speke in myn audience 637

I wolde leue in pees ȝif that I myȝte [leaf 251, back] 638

Wherfore I am disposed vttyrly

As I his sistyr seruede be nyghte

Ryȝt so thynke I to serue hym priuily 641

This warne I ȝow that ȝe nat sodeynly

Out of ȝoure self / for no woo schulde out-rye

Beth pacient & þerof I ȝow praye 644

I haue quod sche seyð thus & euere schal 645

I wol nothyng / ne nyl nothyng certeyn

But as þou lyst not / greuyth me at al

Thow that myn doughtir & myn sone be slayn 648

At ȝoure comaundement it is to seyn

I haue not had no part of chyldere tweyne

But fyrst seknesse / & aftyr wo & peyne 651

- Ye been oure lord doth with þoure owene thyng 652  
 Ryȝt as ȝow leste axseth no reed at me  
 ffor as I lefte at hom al myn clothynge  
 Whan I ferst cam to ȝow ryȝt so quod sche 655  
 Lefte I myn wil / & myn liberte /  
 And tok ȝoure clothynge wherfore I ȝow preyȝe  
 Doth ȝoure plesaunce I wele ȝoure lust obeye 658
- And sertis ȝif I hadde prescience 659  
 ȝoure wil to knowe er ȝe ȝoure lust me tolde  
 I wolde it don with-outyn necligence  
 But now I wot ȝoure lust & what ȝe wolde 662  
 Al ȝoure plesaunce ferme & stable I holde  
 ffor wiste I þat myn deth wolde don ȝoure ese  
 Ryȝt gladly wolde I deye ȝow to plesse 665
- Deth may not make non comparisoun 666  
 Vn-to ȝoure loue & whan this Markys say  
 The constaunce / of his wyf he cast a doun  
 Hise eyen too / & wonderyth that sche may 669  
 In pacience / suffere al this a-ray  
 And forth he goth / with drery cuntenaunce  
 But to his herte it was / a ful gret plesaunce 672
- This vgly sergeaunt in þe same wyse [leaf 252] 673  
 That he hire douȝtyr cauȝte ryȝte so he  
 Or werse ȝif men werse can deuyse  
 Hath hent hire sone that ful was of beute 676  
 And euery in on so pacient was sche  
 That sche no chere made of heynesse  
 But kisse hire sone / & after gan it blysse 679
- Saue this sche preyede hym that ȝif he myȝte 680  
 Hire litille sone he wolde in erthe graue  
 Hise tendere lemys delitat to syȝte  
 ffrom foulȝs & from bestis hym to saue 683



- But sche non answe're myȝte haue  
 He wente his wey as hym nothyng rouȝte  
 But to bolonye he tenderly it brouȝte 686
- This Markys wonderȝth euere lengere the more 687  
 Vp on hire pacience & ȝif that he  
 Ne hadde sothli knowe ther by-fore  
 That parfytly hire childeryn louede sche 690  
 He wolde a went / þat of subtilite  
 And of maleys or of crewel corage  
 That sche hath suffered / this with sad visage 693
- But weel he knew þat next hym self certeyn 694  
 Sche louede hire childeryn best in euery wyse  
 But now of women wilde I axsyn fayn  
 If these assayis myghte not suffyse 697  
 What coude a sturdy husbonde more deuyse  
 To preue hire 'wyffehode' & hire stedefast-nesse <sup>[1—1 in a later hand.]</sup>  
 And he contynuyng'e euere in sturdynesse 700
- But þere been folk of swich condycioun 701  
 That whan þey han a certeyn purpos take  
 They can not stynte of here entencioun  
 But ryȝt as they were boundyn to þat stake 704  
 They wil not of that / ferste purpos slake  
 Right so this ilke markis fullyche hath supposed  
 To tempte his wyf / as he was fyrst purposed 707
- Here waytith / ȝif be word or cuntenaunce [leaf 252, bk] 708  
 That' sche to hym was chaungit of corage  
 But neuere coude he fynde varyaunce  
 Sche was ay on in herte & in visage 711  
 And ay þe ferthere þat sche was in age  
 The moore trewe ȝif þat it were possyble  
 Sche was to hym in loue & more penyble 714

ffor which it semede thus that of hem two	715
Nas but on wil for as Waltyr leste	
The same lust was hyre plesaunce also	
And god be thankede al fyl for the beste	718
Sche schewede wel for no wordely onreste	
A wyf as of hire self nothyng ne schulde	
Wille in effect / but as hire husbonde wolde	721
The slaundere ofte & wyde spradde	722
That of a crewel herte / he wekkedely	
ffor he a poore woman wedded hadde	
Hath morderyd bothe hise childere priuily	725
Swich mordere was a-mong hem comounly	
No wondyr is for to þe peplis ere	
There cam no word / but þat þey morderede were	728
ffor wych ther as his puple ther by / fore	729
Hadde loued hym wel the slaundere of his diffame	
Maade hem þat they hym hatid perfore	
To been a morderere is an hateful name	732
But natheles for ernest ne for game	
He of his crewel purpos nolde stente	
To tempte his wyf was set al his entente	735
Whan þat this doghtyr twelf 3eer was of age	736
He to the court of rome in subtyl wyse	
Enformede of his wil sente his massage	
Comaundyng hem sweche bullys to deuyse	739
As to his crewel purpos may suffyse	
How þat the pope as for the peplis reste	
Bad hym to wedde a-nothir 3if hym leste	742
I seye he bad th[e]y schulde countrefete	[leaf 253] 743
The popis bullis makynge menciouu	
That he hath leue his fyrste wif to lete	
And by the popis dispensacioun	746

And stynte rancure & dissencioun	
By-twixe þe puple & hym thus seyth þ <sup>e</sup> bulle	
The whiche they han pupliced at þ <sup>e</sup> fulle	749
The rude peple as it no wondyr is	750
Wendyn ful wel that it hadde been ryȝt so	
But whan these tydyngis cam to Grysildis	
I deeme that hire herte was ful wo	753
But sche I-like sad for euere mo	
Disposede was this vnable cryature	
Thaduersite / of fortune al tendure	756
Abydyng euer his lust & his plesaunce	757
To wom that sche was ȝeuyñ herte & al	
As to hire verray wordely suffysaunce	
But schortely ȝif this story I tellyn schal	760
This Markys wrytyn hath in special	
A lettere in wheche he schewith hys entente	
And secrely he to boloyne it sente	763
To the erl of paupk which þat hadde tho	764
Wedded his sistyr preyede he specially	
To brynge hym hom a-geyn his chyldere two	
In honorable estat al opynly	767
But on thyng he hym preyede vtterely	
That he to no wyght for no manere.	
Sholde not telle whos childre th[e]y were	770
But seye the maydyn schulde I-weddid be	771
Vn-to the markis of saluce a-non	
And as this erl was preyed so dede he	
ffor at the day set he on his weye is goon	774
Toward saluce & lordis manyon	
In ryche a-ray this made for to gyde	
Hire ȝynge brothir rydyng by hire syde	777

A-rayed was sche toward hire maryage [leaf 259, back] 778  
 This fresche mayde ful of gemmys cleere  
 Hire brothir which seuene 3eer was of age  
 Arayedek ful frosch in his manere 781  
 And thus in gret noblesse & with glad chere  
 Towar Saluces schapyng hire Iourneye  
 ffrom day to day they rydyng in here woye 784

## [PART V.]

[A<sup>1</sup>]-Mong al this aftyr his wikkede vsage [A space has been  
 This Markys 3it his wif to tempte more left in the MS for  
 To the vttyste priue of hire corage this letter.]  
 ffully to han experience & lore 788  
 3if that sche were as stedefast as by-foore  
 He on a day in opyn audience  
 fful boystously hath seyde hire this sentence 791  
 Certis Grisilde I hadde I-now plesaunce 792  
 To han 3ow to myn wif for 3oure goodnesse  
 As for 3oure trouthe & for 3oure obeisaunce  
 Not for 3orere lynage / ne for 3oure rychesse 795  
 But now knowe I in verray sothfastnesse  
 That in gret lordschepe If I wele auyse  
 Ther is gret seruytut in sundery wyse 798  
 I may nat do as euery plowman may 799  
 Myn puple me constreynyth for to take  
 A-noþer wyf & cryen day be day  
 And ek þe popis rancure for to slake 802  
 Consenteth it þat dar I vndyr-take  
 And trewely þus meche I 3ow seye  
 Myn newe wif is comyng by the weye 805  
 Be strong of herte & woyde a-non hire place 806  
 And thilke dowere þat 3e broughte me  
 Take it a-geyn I graunte it of myn grace

Returnyth to 3oure faderis hous quod he	809
No man may han alwey prosperite	
With euene herte I rede 3ow to endure	
The strok of fortune or of auenture	812
And sche answerde a-noon in pacience	[leaf 251] 813
Myn lord quod sche I wot & wyste alwey	
How that by-twixe 3oure magnificence	
And myn pouerte no wyght can ne may	816
Makyn comparysoun it is no nay	
I ne hylde me neuere dygne in no manere	
To be 3oure wyf no / ne 3oure chaumberere	819
And in this hous there 3e me lady made	820
The hyghe god take I for myn witnesse	
And also wysely he myn soule so glade	
I hyld me neuere lady ne maystresse	823
But vmble seruauant to 3oure worthynesse	
And euere schal whil myn lyf may dure	
Abovyn euery wordely creature	826
That 3e so longe of 3oure benyngnetee	827
Han holde me in honour & nobleye	
Wher as I was not worthy for to bee	
That thanke I god / & 3ow to whom I preye	830
ffor 3ilde it 3ow ther is no more to seye	
And to myn fadyr gladly wele I wende	
And with hym dwelle vn-to myn lyuys ende	833
There I was fostered of a chyld ful smal	834
Tyl I be deed myn lyf there wele I leede	
A wydewe clene in body herte & al	
ffor sythe I 3af to 3ow myn maydynhede	837
And am 3oure trewe wyf it is no drede	
God schilde swich a lordis wyf to take	
A-nothir man to husbonde or to make	840



And of 3oure newe wif god of his grace	841
So graunte 3ow wele & prosperitee	
ffor I wele gladly 3ildyn hire myn place	
In which þat I was blysful wone to be	844
ffor syth it lykyth 3ow myn lord quod sche	
That whilhom were al myn hertis reste	
That I schal gon .I. wele goon whan 3ow leste	847
But there as 3e me profere swych dewarye	[leaf 254, bk] 848
As I fyrst brou3te it is weel in myn mynde	
It were mynne wrechede clothis no thyng fayre	
The wheche to me were hard now for to fynde	851
O goode god how gentyl & how kynde	
3e semedyn be 3oure speche & 3oure visage	
The day that makyd was oure maryage	854
But soth is seyð / algate I fynde it trewe	855
ffor in effect it preuede is in me	
Loue is not old / as whan þat it is newe	
But sertis lord for noon aduercite	858
To deyen in þe cas it schal nat be	
That euere in word / or werk I schal repente	
That I 3ow 3af myn herte / with hol entente	861
Myn lord 3e wot that In myn faderys place	862
3e dede me strype out of myn poore weede	
And rychely me claddyn of 3oure grace	
To 3ow brou3te I not ellis out of dreede	865
But feyth & meknesse & maydynhede	
And heere ageyn myn clothynge I restore	
And ek myn weddyng ryng for euere more	868
The remenaunt of 3oure Iewellys redy bee	869
In with 3oure chaumbere that dar I sayn	
Nakyd out of myn faderys hous quod sche	
I cam / & nakyd I mot / turne ageyn	872

Al 3oure plesaunce I wele folwe fayn  
 But 3it I hope it be not 3oure entente  
 That I smokles out of 3oure paleys wente 875

3e coude not don so disonest a thyng 876

That ilke wombe in whiche 3oure chyldere leye  
 Schulde by-fore the peple in myn walkynge  
 Be seyn al bare / therfore I 3ow preye 879

Lat me not lyk a werm / goon by the weye  
 Remembrith 3ow myn owene lord so deere  
 I was 3oure wyf thow I onworthy weere 882

Wherfore in guerdoun of myn maydynhede [leaf 255] 883

Whiche that I brou3te & not ageyn I bere  
 As vouche 3e saf / to 3eue me to myn meede  
 But swich a smok as I was wone to were 886

That I therwith may wrye þ<sup>e</sup> wombe of hire  
 That was 3oure wyf / & here I take myn leue  
 Of 3ow myn owene / lest that I 3ow greue 889

The smok quod he that thow hast on thyn bak 890

Lete it be styлле & bere it forth with the  
 But wel onethe thilke word he spak  
 But wente his wey for reuthe & for pite 893

By-forn hyre folk / hyre seluyn strepyth sche  
 And in hire smok with hed & feet al bare  
 Toward hire faderys hous / forth is sche fare 896

The folk hyre folwyn / wepynge <sup>1</sup>in hire weye<sup>1</sup> [1—1 later]

And fortune ay they curssyn as they goon  
 But sche from wepynge kepte hire eyen dreye  
 Ne in this tyme word ne spak sche noon 900

Hyre fadyr þat of this tydyng herde a-non  
 Curseth the day / & tyme that nature  
 Schop hym to been a lyuys creature 903

ffor out of doute this olde poure man	904
Was euere in suspect of hire maryage	
ffor euere he demede sythe that it be-gan	
That whan the lord fulfyld hadde his corage	907
Hym wolde thynke it were a disparage	
To his estat so lowe for to a-lyghte	
And woydyn hire / as sone as euere he myghte	910
A-geyn his doughtyr / hastyliche goth he	911
ffor he by noyse of folk / knew hire comyng	
And with hire olde coote / as it myghte be	
He cowerith hire / ful sorwefully wepyng	914
But on hire body / myghte it not brynge	
ffor rude was the cloth / & sche more of age	
By dayis fele / than at hire maryage	917
T[h]us with hire fadyr / for a certeyn space [leaf 255, bk]	918
Dwellyth this flour of wyfly pacience	
That neythir by hire wordys ne hire face	
By-fore the folk ne ek in hire absence	921
Ne schewede sche þat hire was don offence	
Ne of hire highe estat no remembraunce	
Ne hadde sche as by hyre cuntenaunce	924
No wondyr is / for in hire greete estate	925
Hyre gost was ay in pleyn humylitee	
No tendere mouth non herte delicate	
No pompe no semblaunt of royaltee	928
But ful of pacient benygnetee	
Dyscreef & prideles / ay honorable	
And to hire husbonde euere mek & stable	931
Men speke of Iob / & most for his humblesse	932
As clerkis whan hem leste can wel endite	
Namely of men / but as in sothfastnesse	
Thow Clerkys preysyn wemen but a lyte	935

There Can no man in humblesse hem a- quyte

As wemen <sup>1</sup> can ne ben half so trewe<sup>1</sup>

[—<sup>1</sup> later]

As wemen ben but it be falle of newe

938

[PART VI.]

¶ ffrom Boloynge as this erl of pauyk come

939

Of which þe fame vp sprong bothe more & lesse

And to the peplis eris alle & some

Was kouth eek that a newe Markisesse

942

He with hym broghte in swich pompe & richesse

That neuere was there seyn with manys eye

So noble a-ray in al west Lumbardye

945

This Markis which that shoop & knew al this

946

Er þat this erl was come / sente his massage

ffor thilke sely pore <sup>2</sup>Gresyldis<sup>2</sup>

[—<sup>2</sup> later]

And sche with <sup>2</sup>houmble<sup>2</sup> herte & glad visage

949

Noght in a swollyn thoght in hire corage

Cam at his heste / & on hire kneis hire sette

And reuerently & wisely / sche hym grette

952

Grisilde quod he / myn wil is outirly

[leaf 256]

953

This mayde þat schal weddit been to me

Resseyuede ben to morwe as roially

As it possible is in myn hous to be

956

And ek that euery wiȝt in his degere

Haue his estat / in sittynge & seruyse

And hegh plesaunce / as I can best deuyse

959

I haue no wemen suffisaunt certeyn

960

The chambris for taraye in ordenaunce

Aftyr myn lust & þerfore wolde I fayn

That thyn were / al swich manere gouernaunce

963

Thow knowyst ek of old / al myn plesaunce

Thow thyn aray be badde & euele be seye

Do þou thyn deuer / at the leste weye

966

Nat only lord þat I am glad quod sche	967
To do þoure lust / but .I. desyre also	
þow for to serue & plese in myn degre	
With-outyn feyntynge & schal euere mo	970
Ne neuere for no wele ne no wo	
Ne schal myn gost with-inne myn herte stente	
To loue þow best / with al myn hol entente	973
And with that word sche gan the hous to dighte	974
And tabellis for to sette & al redy make	
And peynede hire to don al þat sche myȝte	
Preyinge þ <sup>e</sup> chambereris for godis sake	977
To haste hem & faste swepe & shake	
And sche þ <sup>e</sup> moste / seruyable of alle	
Hath euery chambre arayed and his halle	980
A-boutyn vndryn gan this erl a-lyȝte	981
That with hym broghte these noble childere tweye	
ffor which the peple ran to seen the syght	
Of hire aray so rychely be seye	984
And thanne at erst a-mongis hem they seye	
That waltyr was no fol thow þat hym leste	
To chonge his wyf / for it was for the beste	987
ffor sche is fayrere as they demyn alle	[leaf 256, back] 988
As is Gresilde & more tendere of age	
And fayrere freut be-twen hem schulde falle	
And more plesaunt for hire heye lenage	991
Hire brothir ek so fayr was of visage	
That hem to sen þ <sup>e</sup> peple hath caught plesaunce	
Comendynge now þ <sup>e</sup> Markys gouernaunce	994
O stormy puple / on sad & euere vntrewe	Auctor
Ay vndiscret & chaungynge as a fane	
Delytynge euere in rumbul þat is newe	
ffor lyk the mone / ay waxe ȝe & wane	998



Ay ful of clappyng deere ynogh a Iane  
 3oure dom is fals / 3oure constaunce euel preuyth  
 A ful greet fol is he þat on 3ow leuyth 1001

Thus seydyn sadde folk in þat Cetee 1002  
 Whan þat the peple gazedē vp & down  
 ffor they were glad rygh for þ<sup>e</sup> nouelteē  
 To haue a newe lady of hire toun 1005  
 No more of this now make I mençioun  
 But to grysilde a-geyn wil I me dresse  
 And telle hire constance & hire besynesse 1008

fful bisy was Grisilde / in euery thyng 1009  
 That to þ<sup>e</sup> feste / was apertynent  
 Rygh nought was sche / abast of hire clothynge  
 Thow it were rude & sumdel ek to-rent 1012  
 But with glad chier to þ<sup>e</sup> 3ate is went  
 With opere folk to greete the Markisesse  
 And aftyr doth / forth hire besinesse 1015

With so glad chiere / hire gestis sche resseyuydh 1016  
 And so benyngnely euerych in his degre  
 That no defaute no man aperseyuyth  
 But ay they wondere / what sche myghte be 1019  
 That in so pore aray / was for to se  
 And coude swich honour / & reuerence  
 And worthily they preyse hire prudence 1022

In al this meene while / sche ne stente [leaf 257] 1023  
 That mayde & ek hire broth[i]r to comende  
 With al hire herte in ful benyngne entente  
 So wel þat no man coude hire pris a-mende 1026  
 But at þ<sup>e</sup> laste / whan that þ<sup>e</sup> lordys wende  
 To syttyn down to mete he gan to calle  
 Grysilde as sche was bysy in the halle 1029

Grysilde quod he as it were in his pley	1030
How lykyth þ <sup>e</sup> myn wif & hire beaute	
Ryzt wel quod sche myn lord / for in good fey	
A fayrere saugh I neuere non þan sche	1033
I preye to god / 3eue 3ow prosperite	
And so hope I þat he wele to 3ow sende	
Plesaunce I-now vn-to 3oure lyuys ende	1036
O thyng biseke I 3ow & warne also	1037
That 3e ne pryke / with no turmentynge	
This newe mayde as 3e han don mo	
ffor sche is fosteryd in hire norychyng	1040
More tenderly & to myn supposynge	
Sche coude not aduercytee endure	
As coude a pore fosterede creature	1043
And whan this waltyr saugh hire pacienco	1044
Hire glad chere & non maleyce at al	
And he so ofte hadde don hire offence	
And sche ay sad & constaunt as a wal	1047
Conteynyng eue / hire innocent ouyr al	
This sturdy Markys gan his herte dresse	
To rewe vp-on hire / wifly stedefastnesse	1050
That is I-nogh Grisilde myn quod he	1051
Be now no moore a-gast ne euele a-payd	
I haue thyn feyth & thyn benygnetee	
As wel as eue weman was a-sayed	1054
In gret estat & porely arayed	
Now knowe I deere wif / thyn stedefastnesse	
And hire in armys took / & gan hyre kesse	1057
And sche for wondyr tok of it no kep	[leaf 257, back] 1058
Sche herde not what thyng he to hire seyde	
Sche ferde as sche hadde styrt out of hyre slep	
Tyl sche out of hire masedenesse a-breyde	1061

Grisilde quod he bi god that for vs deyede  
 Thow art myn wif / ne non oþer ne haue  
 Ne neuere ne hadde as god myn soule saue 1064

This is thyn douȝtyr / which þow hast supposyd 1065  
 To been myn wyf / þat oþer feithfully  
 Schal been myn eyr / as I haue ay supposid  
 Thow bar hym in thyn body trewely 1068  
 At Boloynne haue I kept hem pryuyly  
 Take hem a-geyn for now þow mayst nat seye  
 That þou hast lost non of thynne childeryn tweye 1071

And folk that oþere weyis han seyde of mee 1072  
 I warne hem weel that I haue don this dede  
 ffor no maleys / nor for no creneltee  
 But for tassaye in the thyn womanhede 1075  
 And not for to sle mynne childeryn god for-beede  
 But for to kepe hem priuyly & stille  
 Til I thyn purpos knew & al thyn wille 1078

Whan this sche herde / aswounne doun sche fallyth 1079  
 ffor pytous Ioye & after hire swounynge  
 Sche beþe hire ȝonge chyldere vn-to hyre callyth  
 And in hire armys / pitously / wepyng 1082  
 Enbrasyth hym / & tenderely kyssynge  
 fful lyk a modyr with hire salte terys  
 Sche bathith bothe hire visage & hire herys 1085

O which a pitous thyng it was to se 1086  
 Hire swounynge & hire humble voys for to heere  
 Graunt mercy lord / god thanke ȝow quod sche  
 That ȝe han sauede me mynne chyldere deere 1089  
 Now rekke I neuere to been ded ryȝt here  
 Sithe I stonde in ȝoure loue & in ȝoure grace  
 No fors of deth ne whan myn spiryt pace 1092

O tendere o 3onge o deere childere mynne	[leaf 258]	1093
3oure woful modyr / wende stedefastly		
That crewel houndis / or sum foul vermyn		
Haddyn etyn 3ow / but god of his mercy		1096
And 3oure benyngne fadyr tendyrly		
Hath don 3ow kept & in that same stounde		
Al sodeynly sche swapte a-doun to grounde		1099
And in hire swough so sadly holdyth sche		1100
Hyre chylderyn two / whan sche gan hem tenbrace		
That with gret sleyzt / & gret difficultee		
The chyldere from hire arm / they gunne a-race		1103
O manye a ter / on manye a pitous face		
Doun ran of hem that stodyn hire besyde		
Vnnethe a-boutyn hire myzte they not a-byde		1106
Walter hire gladith / & hire sorwe slakyth		1107
Sche rysith vp abaschid from hire traunce		
And euery wi3t hire Ioye & feste makyth		
Til sche hath caugt a-geyn hire cuntenaunce		1110
Walter hire doth so feythful plesaunce		
That it was deynte for to sen the cheere		
By-twixe hem two now the[y] ben met in feere		1113
These ladyis whan that they here tyme sey		1114
Han takyn hire & in-to chambere goon		
And strippe hire out of hire rude a-ray		
And in a cloth of gold that bryzte schoon		1117
With a coroun of manye a ryche stoon		
Vp-on hire heed they in-to halle hire brouzte		
And þere sche was honourede as hyre ouzte		1120
Thus hath this pitous day a blysful ende		1121
ffor euery man & woman doth his myzt		
This day in myrthe & reuel to dispende		
Tyl on the walkyn schon the sterrys lyzt		1124

ffor more solempne in euery manys syȝt  
 This feste was & grettere of costage  
 Than was the reuel of hyre maryage 1127

fful manye a ȝeer in hih prosperite [leaf 258, back] 1128  
 Lyuyn these too in concord & in reste  
 And richely his doghtyr maryede he  
 Vn-to a lord on of the worthieste 1131  
 Of al ytayle & þanne in pees & reste  
 Hiise wyuys fadyr in his court he kepith  
 Tyl þat þe soule out of the body crepith 1134

His sone succedith in his heritage 1135  
 In reste & pees aftyr his faderys day  
 And fortinat was ek in mariage  
 Al put he nat his wif in greet assay 1138  
 This world is nat so strong It is no nay  
 As it hath been in olde tymys ȝoore  
 And herkenyth what this auctor seyth therfore 1141

This stori is seyð noght for that wyuys schulde Auctor  
 ffolwyn grisilde as in humylitee  
 ffor it were importable thogh they wolde  
 But for that euery wight in his degree 1145  
 Schulde been constaunt in aduersitee  
 As was Grisilde / therfore this Petrak wryteth  
 This story which he wíth high style endyteth 1148

ffor sythe a woman was so pacient 1149  
 Vn-to a mortal man wel more vs oghite  
 Receyuyn al in gre þat god we see  
 ffor greet skele is he / preue that he wroghte 1152  
 But he ne temptyth no man that he boughte  
 As seith seynt Iame / If ye his pistyl reede  
 He preuyth folk al day/ it is no drede 1155



And sufferyth vs as for excercise	1156
With scharpe schourgis / of aduercitee	
fful ofte to be bet in sundery wyse	
Not for to knowe oure wil for certis he	1159
Er we were born knew al oure freletee	
And for oure beste is al his gouernaunce	
Lat vs thanne lyue in verteuous sufferaunce	1162
But on word lordynyis herkenyth er I go	[leaf 259] 1163
It were ful hard to fynde now on dayis	
In al a toun Grysildis thre or two	
ffor ȝif that thei were / put to swych a-sayis	1166
The gold of hem han now so badde alayis	
With bras that thogh the coyn be fayr at Iye	
It wele rathere breste atwo than plye	1169
ffor which heere for the wyuys loue of bathe	1170
Whos lyf & al hyre secte god meynteene	
In high maystrye & ellis were it skathe	
I wele with lusty herte frosch & grene	1173
Sey ȝow a song to glade ȝow I wene	
And let vs stynte of earnest-ful matiere	
Herkenyth myn song / þat seyth in this manere	1176

### Lenuoy de Chaucer

G	rysilde is deed & ek hire pacience	
	And bothe at onoyis buried in Ytaylor	
	ffor whiche in opene audience	1179
	No weddede man / so hardy be tassaylle	
	His wyuys pacience entrost to fynde	
	Grisildis for in certeyn he schal faylle	1182

O noble wyuys ful of prudence  
 Let noon humilite ȝoure tunge nayille  
 Ne lat no klerk haue cause nor dilygence 1185  
 To wryte of ȝow a story of swych meruaile  
 As of Grisildis pacient & kynde  
 Lest Chicheuache / you swolwe in hire entrayle 1188

folwith Ecco / that holdyth no sylence  
 But euere answerith at the countretayle  
 Beth not bedaffyd for ȝoure Innocence 1191  
 But scharpely takyth on ȝow the gouernaile  
 Enpryntith wel this lessoun in ȝoure mynde  
 ffor comune profyt / sithe it may a-wayle 1194

Ye Archewyuys stondyth at ȝoure defence [leaf 259, back]  
 Syn ȝe been stronge as is a greet Camayle  
 Ne sufferyth nat / þat men ȝow doon offence 1197  
 And sklendere wyues feble as in batayle  
 Beeth egre as is a tigre ȝong in ȝouth  
 Ay clappith as a melle I ȝow consayle 1200

Ne drede hem nat do hem no reuerence  
 ffor thow thyn husbond / armede be in mayle  
 The arwis of thyn crabbede eloquence 1203  
 Schal perce his brest & ek his auentayle  
 In Ialusye I reede ek thow hym bynde  
 And thow schat make hym couche as doth a quayle 1206

If thow be fayr / ther folk been in presence  
 Schewe-thu thyn visage & thyn aparayle  
 ȝif thow be foul be fre of thyn dispence 1209  
 To gete the frendys ay do thyn trauayle  
 Be ay of chir as lyght as lef on lynde  
 And lat hym care & wepe & wrynge & wayle 1212

**Heere hath the clerk of Oxenforthe ended his tale**

## APPENDIX TO GROUP E, § 2.

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[? *Original, but rejected, End-Link to the Clerk's Tale, perhaps following l. 1162, with which the paraphrase of Petrarch's Latin ends, or l. 1169.*]

This worthi clerk whan endede was his tale  
 Oure ost seyde & swor by godys bonys  
 Me were leuere than a barel ale  
 Myn wif at hom hadde herd this legende onys 4  
 This was a gentil tale for the nonys  
 As to myn purpos woste 3e myn wille  
 But thyng that wil nat be lat it be stille 7

Heere folwith the prologe of the marchauntes tale [If 259,  
back]

[Leaf 260 (containing the Merchant's prologue, the painting of him, and 20 lines of the tale) has been cut out of the Cambridge MS Gg. 4. 27.]

[Cambr. Univ. MS Dd. 4. 24.]

**W**epyng and waylyng / care and other sorwe [1106]  
 I knowe I-now / on Euen and on morwe  
 Quod the Marchaunt / and so don othere moo  
 That wedded ben / I trowe that it be so

ful wel I wot / it fareth so by me

I haue a wyf / the werste that may be

ffor though the fend / to hire I-coupled were

She wolde him ouer macche / I dar wel swere 1220

what shulde I 3ow reherce / in special

hire heye malice / she is a shrewe with al

There is a long / and a large difference

Be-twix Grisildis / grete pacience 1224

And of my wyf / the passyng cruelte

were I vnbounden / also mot I the

I wolde neuere eft / comen in the snare

we wedded men / lyue in sorwe and care 1228

Assay who so wyl / and he shal fynde

That I seye soth / be seynt Thomas of Inde

As for the more part / I seye nat alle

God shilde that it shulde / so byfalle 1232

A goode sire hoost / I haue I-wedded be

Theise Monthes two / and more nat parde

And 3et I trowe / that he that al his lyue

wyfleeas hath ben / though that man wold him ryue 1236

Vn-to the hert / ne coude in no manere

Tellen so meche sorwe / as I now here

Coude tellen / of my wyues cursidnes

Now quod oure Host / Marchaunt so god 3ow blis 1240

Syn 3e so mechil knowen / of that art

fful hertily I pray 3ow / telle vs part

Gladly quod he / but of myn owen sore

ffor sory hert / I telle may nomore] [Dd. 4. 24 extract ends]

[*Sloane 1685, leaf 87.*]

[Whilome þere was dwellynge in Lumbardye  
 A worpi knyzt þat borne was at pavye  
 In whiche he lyued in grete prosperite  
 And sixty ȝere a wyfles man was he 1248  
 And folowyd ay hys bodyly delyte  
 On womman þere as was hys appetyte  
 As don þese foules þat ben seculers  
 And whan þat he was paste sixty ȝeres 1252.  
 Were hit for holynesse or for doteage  
 I can not sey but suche a grete corage  
 hade þis knyzt to be a weddid man  
 þat day and nyzt he dothe aȝ þat he can 1256  
 To aspye where þat he wedded myzt be  
 Praynge oure lorde to graunten hym þat he  
 Myzt onys knowe þat blessefulle lyf  
 That ys bytwext an husbonde & his wyf 1260  
 And for to leuen vnder þat holy bonde  
 With first god man to womman bande  
 Non other lyf seyde he ys worthe a bene  
 For wedlok ys so esy & so clene] [*Sloane 1685 extract ends*]  
 That in this world it is a paradys [*Camb. Gg. 4. 27, leaf 261*]  
 Thus seyde this olde knyght þat was so wys  
 And serteynly as soth as god Is kyng  
 To take a wyf it is a glorious thyng 1268  
 And nemely whan a man is old & hore  
 Thanne is a wyf the freut of his tresore  
 Thanne schulde he take a ȝong wyf & a fayr  
 On whiche he myzte engendere & been eyr 1272



And leede his lyf in ioye & in solace  
 Where as these bachelerys synge allas  
 Whan that they fynde ony aduercitee  
 In loue which is but childis varytee 1276  
 And trewely it is weel to been so  
 That bachelerys han ofte payne & wo  
 On brothil ground they bylde / & brothelnesse  
 They fynde / whan they wene sekynnesse 1280  
 They lyue but as a bryd or as a beste  
 In lyberte & vndyr non areste  
 There as a weddede man in his estat  
 Leuyth a lyf blysfyl & ordenat 1284  
 Vndyr the ȝok of maryage I-bounde  
 Wel may his herte in ioye & blisse aboūde  
 ffor who can been so buxsum as a wif  
 Who is so trewe & ek so ententyf 1288  
 To keepe hym syk & hol as is his make  
 ffor weel or wo sche wele hym not for-sake  
 Sche is nat wery hym to loue & serue  
 Thogh þat he lye bedrede tyl he sterue 1292  
 And ȝit some clerkys seyn it is nat so  
 Of which þ<sup>e</sup> theofraste is on of tho  
 What fors thow Theofraste lyste to lye  
 Ne take no wyf quod he for husbonderye 1296  
 As for to spare in houshold thyn dispence  
 A trewe seruauant doth more diligence  
 Thyn good to kepe than tyn owene wyf  
 ffor sche wele cleyme half part al hire lyf 1300  
 And ȝyf þou be sek so god me save  
 Thyȝne verray frendys or a trewe knave  
 Wele kepe þe bet / than sche that wayth ay [leaf 261, back]  
 Aftyr thyn good / & hath doon manye a day 1304  
 And ȝif thow take a wyf on to thyn hold /  
 fful lyghtely mayst þou been a coukewold ¶ Cause  
 This sentence / & manye an hunderede werse  
 Wryth this man / there god his bonys curse 1308

But takyth no kep of alle swich vanytee  
 Defye Theofraste & herke me  
 A wyf is godys 3ifte verrayly  
 Alle opere manere 3iftys hardyly 1312  
 As londys<sup>1</sup> rentys / pasture or comune [1 *first lordys*]  
 Or meoblys alle been 3iftys of fortune  
 That passyn / as a schadewe vp on a wal  
 But dredles if pleynly speke I schal 1316  
 A wyf wele laste & in thyn hous endure  
 Weel lengere than the lyste parauenture  
 Maryage is a ful gret sakrement  
 He which that hath no wyf I helde hym schent 1320  
 He lyuyth helpeles & al desolat  
 I speke of folk in seculer estat  
 And herke why I seye nat this for noght  
 That weman is for manys helpe I-wrought 1324  
 The heye god<sup>2</sup> whan he badde adam makyd [2 *first good*]  
 And say hym al a-lone bely nakyd /  
 God of his grette goodnesse seyde than  
 Lat vs now make an helpe vn-to this man 1328  
 Lyk to hym self & thanne he made hym Eue  
 Heere may 3e se &<sup>3</sup> here may 3e preue [3 *erasure*]  
 That wif is manys helpe & his confort  
 His paradys terestre / & his desport 1332  
 So buxsum & so vertevous is sche  
 They muste nedis liue in vnite  
 On flesch they been & on blood as I gesse  
 Hath but oon herte / in wele & in destresse 1336  
 A wif a seynte Marie benedicite  
 How my3te a man han ony aduersite  
 That hath a wif sertis I can not seye  
 The blysse that is be-twixe hem tweye 1340  
 Ther may non tunge telle nor herte thynke [leaf 262]  
 3if he be pore sche helpith hym to swynke  
 Sche kepith his good / & wastyth neuere a del  
 Al that hire husbonde luste hire likyth weel 1344

Sche seyth nat onys nay whan he seyth ye  
 Do this seyth he al redy sere seyth sche  
 O blysfyl ordere of wedlok precious  
 Thow art so merye & ek so vertyuuous 1348  
 And so comendit & apreuyd ek  
 That euery man that halt hym worth a lek  
 Vp-on hise bare kneis oghte al his lyf  
 Thankyn his god that hym hath sent a wyf 1352  
 Or ellys preye to god hym for to fynde  
 A wif to laste vn-to his lyuys ende  
 ffor thanne his lyf is set in sekynnesse  
 He may not ben disseyuyd as I gesse 1356  
 So þat he werche aftyr his wyuys reed  
 Thanne may he baldely beryn vp his heed  
 They been so trewe & therwithal so wise  
 ffor which ȝif þou wilt werkyn as the wyse 1360  
 Do alwey so as wemen wele þ<sup>e</sup> reede  
 Lo how that Iacob as these clerkys rede  
 By good conseyl of his modyr Rebekke  
 Bond the kidis skyn a-boutyn his nekke 1364  
 ffor which his faderis benyson he wan  
 Lo Iudith as the story telle can  
 By good conseyl sche godys peple kepte  
 And slow hym Olefernus as he slepte 1368  
 Lo Abigayl bi good conseyl how sche  
 Sauede hire husbonde / Naabal whan þat he  
 Schulde a be slayn & loke Ester also  
 By good conseyl deliuerede out of woo 1372  
 The peple of god / & made hym Mardoche  
 To assure en-haunsede for to bee  
 There nys no thyng In gre superlatyf  
 As seyth senec. A-boue an humble wyf 1376  
 Suffere thyn wyuys tunge as catoun bit  
 Sche schal comaunde & sche schal suffere it  
 And ȝit sche wele obeye of curteysye  
 A wyf is kepere of thyn husbondrye 1380

[leaf 262, back]

Weel may the syke man bewayle & wepe  
 There as þer is no wif the hous to kepe  
 I warne the ȝif wisely thow wilt werche  
 Loue wel thyn wif / as Cryst louede his cherche 1384  
 If thow louyst thyn self thow louyst thyn wyf  
 No man hatyth his flesch but in his lyf  
 He fosteryth it & therfore bidde I the  
 Cheryche thyn wyf or thow schat neuere the 1388  
 Husbonde or wyf / what so men Iape or pleye  
 Of wordely folk / holdyn þe sikere weye  
 They been so knyht there may non harm be-tyde  
 And namely vp-on the wyuys syde 1392  
 ffor which this Ianuarye of whiche I tolde  
 Considerede hath with hise dayis olde  
 The lusty lyf / the vertyvous quiete  
 That is in maryage hony swete 1396  
 And for hise frendis on a day he sente  
 To tellyn hem teffect of his entente  
 ¶ With face sad / his tale he hath hem told  
 He seyde frendis I am hor & old 1400  
 And alwey god wot on myn pittis brynke  
 Vp-on the soule sumwhat muste I thynke  
 I haue myn body folyly dispendit  
 Blyssede be god that it schal ben a-mendit 1404  
 ffor I wele been certayn a weddede man  
 And that a-noon / in al the haste I can  
 Vn-to sum mayde fayr & tendere of age  
 I preye ȝow schapith for myn maryage 1408  
 Al sodeynly for / I nyl nat a-byde  
 And I wele fonde tespie on myn syde  
 To whom I may been weddit hastyly  
 But for as meche as ȝe been mo than I 1412  
 ȝe schul rathere swich a thyng espyen  
 Than I & where me best were to allyen  
 But on thyng werne I ȝow myzne freendis deere  
 I wele non old wyf han in no manere — 1416

Sche schal not passe twenty 3eer certayn	[leaf 263]
Old fysch & 3ong flesch/ wolde I haue ful fayn	
Bet is quod he a pyk than a pykerel	
And bet than old bef is the tendere veel	1420
I wil no weman / thretty 3eer of age	
It is but benestraw / & gret forage	
And ek these olde wyuys god it wot	
They cunne so meche craft on wadis boot	1424
So meche broke harm whan hem leste	
That with hem schulde I neuere lyue in resto	
ffor sundery scolys make subtyl clerkys	
Woman of manye scole half a clerk is	1428
But serteynly a 3ong thyng may men gye	
Ryght as men may warm wex with handis plye	
Wherfore I sey 3ow pleyonly in a clause	
I wele noon old wyf han for this cause	1432
ffor 3if so were I hadde swich myschaunce	
That I in hire ne coude haue no plesaunce	
Thanne schulde [I] lede myn lyf in a-vouterye	
And streyt to the deuyll whan I deye	1436
Ne chyldere schulde I none vp-on hire gete	
3it were me leuere houndis haddyn me etyn	
Than that myn erytage schulde falle	
In straunge hand & this I telle 3ow alle	1440
I dote not I wot the cause why	
Men schulde wedde & ferthere more wot I	
There spekyth manye a man of mariage	
That wot no more of it than wot myn page	1444
ffor whiche causis men schulde take a wyf	
Sith he ne may nat liue chast his lyf	
Tak hym a wyf with gret deuocioun	
By cause of leful procreacioun	1448
Of childere too thonour of god a-boue	
And nat only / for paramour or loue	
And for they schulde / lecherye eschue	
And 3ilde here dette / whan þat it is dewe	1452



Or for eche of hem / schulde helpyn oþer  
 In myschif / as a systyr / schal the brothir  
 And lyuyn in chastite ful holy-ly [leaf 263, back<sup>1</sup>  
 But siris bi ȝoure leue þat am not I 1456  
 ffor god be thankyd I dar make a-vaunt  
 I fele myn lemys starke & suffisaunt  
 To do al that a man bihouyth to  
 I wot myn self best what I may do 1460  
 Thow I be hor I fare as doth a tree  
 That blometh er than freut I-wexe bee  
 A blosmy tre is neythir dreye ne ded  
 I fele me nowre hor but on myn heed 1464  
 Myn herte & alle mynne lymys been as grene  
 As laurer thourgh þ<sup>e</sup> ȝeer is ay seene  
 And syn that ȝe han herd al myn entente  
 I prey ȝow to myn wil ȝe wele assente 1468  
 ¶ Dyuers men dyuersly hym tolde  
 Of mariage manye ensaumplis olde  
 Some blamede it some preysede it certeyn  
 But at the laste schortely for to seyn 1472  
 As alday fallyth altercacioun  
 By-twyxe fryndys in disputacioun  
 There fyl a stryf bi-twyxen hise bretheryn two  
 Of which that on is clepid placebo Placebo  
 Iustinus sothly cleped was that oþer  
 Placebo seyde o Ianuarye brothir  
 fful lityl neede/ hadde ȝe myn lord so deere  
 Conseyll to axe of ony that is heere 1480  
 But that ȝe been so ful of sapience  
 That ȝow ne lykyth for ȝoure hye prudence  
 To wyue fro the word of Salamon  
 [ ] [No gap in MS, but  
a mark of omission;  
and a line is left  
blank at the bottom  
of the leaf for the  
omitted words.]  
 Werke alle thynges by conseyll thus seyth he  
 And thanne schat þou not repente the  
 And thow that salamon spak swych a word  
 Myn owene deere brothir & myn lord 1488

So wysely god myn soule brynge at reste  
 I holde 3ore conseyl is the beste  
 ffor brothir myn of me tak this motyf  
 I haue now been a court man al myn lyf 1492  
 And god it wot thow I onworthy bee [leaf 264]  
 I haue stondyn in ful gret de-gree  
 A-boutyn lordis of ful high estaat  
 3eet hadde I neuere with non of hem debaat 1496  
 I neuere hem contraryed trewely.  
 I woot weel that myn lord can moore þan I  
 What that he seyth I holde it ferme & stable  
 I sey the same or ellys thyng semblable 1500  
 A ful gret fol is ony conseyllour  
 That seruyth ony lord of hey onour  
 That dar presume or ellys thynkyn it  
 That his conseyl schulde passe his lordis wit 1504  
 Nay lordis been none folys be myn fay  
 3ee han 3oure self schewid heere to day  
 So high sentence so holyly & so wel  
 That I consente & conferme euery deel 1508  
 3oure wordis alle & 3oure opynyoun  
 By god there nys no man in al this toun  
 Ne in al ytayil that coude bet a sayd  
 Cryst hoold hym of this consayl wol weel apayed 1512  
 And trewely it is an hygh corage  
 Of ony man that schapyn is in age  
 To takyn a 3ong wyf by myn fader ken  
 3oure herte hangith on a Ioly pyn 1516  
 Doth now in this matyr ry3t as 3ow lyst  
 ffor finally I holde it for the best  
 ¶ Iustinus þat ay styлле sat & herde Iustinus  
 Ry3t in this wyse / to placebo answerde 1520  
 Now brothir myn be pacient I preye  
 Syn 3e han seyde & herkenyth what I seye  
 Senek a-mong hise othere wordis wyse Seneca.  
 Syn that a man hym ou3te rygh weel tavisе 1524

To whom he 3euyth his lond or his catel  
 And syn I ou3te a-vise me ry3t wel  
 To whom I 3eue myn good a-wey fro me  
 Weel more I ou3te avisede be 1528  
 To whom I 3eue myn body for alwey  
 I warne 3ow weel it is no childys pley  
 To take a wif with-oute a-vysement [leaf 264, back]  
 Meen muste enquiryre this is myn assent 1532  
 Wher sche be wys & sobere or dronkelewe  
 Or proud or othere weyis a schrewe  
 A chidystere or wastouur of thyn good  
 Or ryche or pore or ellis mannyssch wood 1536  
 Al be it so that no man fyndyn schal  
 Noon in this world that trottyth hool in al  
 Ne man ne beste whiche as men coude deuyse  
 But nathe-lees it oghte I-nough suffise 1540  
 With ony wyf 3if so were that sche hadde  
 Moo thewys goode / than / vicis badde  
 And al this askyth leyser for tenqueere  
 ffor god it wot I haue wepte manye a tere 1544  
 fful priuily syn that I hadde a wyf  
 Preyso ho so wole a weddede manys lyf  
 Certeyn I fynde it but cost & care  
 And obseruancis of alle blyssis bare 1548  
 And 3it god wot myne neighe-bouris a-boute  
 And namely of women manye a route  
 Seyn that I haue the moste stedefast wyf  
 And ek the mekeste on that beryth lyf 1552  
 But I wot best where wryngeth me myn scho  
 Ye mowe for ryght as 3ow leste do  
 A-viseth 3ow 3e been a man of age  
 How that 3e enteryn / in-to a maryage 1556  
 And namely with a 3yng wif. & a fayr  
 By hym that maade watyr erthe & ayr  
 The 3yngeste man that is in al this route  
 Is bisy I-nogh to bryngyn it a-boute 1560

To han his wif a-lone trostyth me  
 3e schul not plesse hire fully 3erys thre  
 This is to seyme to don hire ful plesaunce  
 A wyf axeth ful manye an obseruaunce 1564  
 I preye 3ow that 3e ben nat euele a-payd  
 ¶ Weel quod this Ianuarye hast þou sayd  
 Straw for thyne senek & for thyn prouerbis  
 I counte not a paner ful of erbys 1568  
 Of scole termys wisere men than thow [leaf 265]  
 As thow hast herd assentedyn right now  
 To myn purpos Placebo what sey 3e  
 I seye it is a cursede man quod he 1572  
 That lettyth matrimonye sekerly  
 And with that word they rysyn sodeynly<sup>1</sup> [<sup>1</sup> deynly corrected:  
 sodeynli in margin]  
 And been assentid fully that he schulde  
 Been wedded whan hym leste & where he wolde 1576  
 ¶ His fantasye / & curyous besynesse  
 ffrom day to day / gan in the soule enpresse  
 ffor Ianuarye a-boute his maryage  
 Manye fayr schap & manye fayr visage 1580  
 There passede thorw his herte nygh<sup>t</sup> be nyght  
 As who so take a myrour pulschede bryght  
 And sette it in a comoun market place  
 Thanne schulde he seen manye a figeur pace<sup>2</sup> [<sup>2</sup> first face]  
 By his myrour & in the same wyse  
 Gan Ianuarie in with his thought a-vyse  
 Of maydenys which that dwellyn hym by syde  
 He wiste nat where that he myghte a-byde 1588  
 ffor 3if that on haue beute in his face  
 A nothir stant so in the puplis grace  
 ffor hire sadnesse & hire benyngnetee  
 Tha<sup>t</sup> of the peple gretteste voys hadde sche 1592  
 And some were ryche & haddyn badde name  
 But natheles by-twixe earnest & game  
 He at the laste apoyntyd hym on on  
 And leet alle opere from his herte goon 1596

And chese hire of his owene autoritee  
 ffor loue is blynd alday & may not see  
 And whan that he was in his bedde brought  
 He portreyede in his herte & in his thought 1600  
 Hire frossche beute & hyre age tendere  
 Hire myddyl smal & hire armys longe & sklendere  
 Hire wise gouernaunce / hire gentillesse  
 Hire womanly berynge & hire sadnesse 1604  
 And whan that he on hire was condessendit  
 Hym thouzte his choys myzte not been a-mendit  
 ffor whan that he hym selue concludede hadde [leaf 265, back]  
 Hym thouzte eche othere manys wit so badde 1608  
 That impossible it were to replye  
 A-geyn his choys that was his fantassie  
 Hise frendis sente he th<sup>o</sup>1 at his instaunce [1 to altered to the]  
 And preyede hem to do hym that plesaunce 1612  
 That hastely they wolde don hym come  
 He wolde abrege hire lordschepe alle en some  
 Nedyth namore for hym to goon ne ryde  
 He<sup>2</sup> was a-poyntid there he wolde a-bide [2 e corrected] 1616  
 Placebo cam & ek hise frendis soone  
 And aldyrferst he had hem alle a boone  
 That noone of hem / noone argumentis make  
 Ageyn the purpos which that he hath take 1620  
 Which purpos was plesaunt to god seyde he  
 And verray ground of his prosperitee  
 He seyde there was a maydyn in the toun  
 Which that of beute hadde greet renoun 1624  
 Al weere it so sche weere of smal degre  
 Suffiseth hym hire 3outhes & hire beutee  
 Whiche mayde he seyde he wolde han to his wyf  
 To leede in ese & holynesse his lyf 1628  
 And thankede god that he myzte han hire al  
 That no wyzt of his blysse partyn schal  
 And preyede hem to laboure in this nede  
 And schapen that he fayle nat to speede 1632



ffor thanne he seyde his spiryght was at ese  
 Thanne is quod he no thyng may me displese  
 Saue on thyng prikyth in myn concience  
 The whiche I wele reherce in ȝoure presence 1636  
 ¶ I haue he seyde herd seyde / ful ȝore ago  
 There may no man haue *parfit* blyssis two  
 This is to seyne in erthe & ek in heuene  
 ffor thow he kepe hym from the synnys seuene 1640  
 And ek from euery braunce of tylke tree  
 ȝit is there so *parfit* felicite  
 And so greet ese & lust in maryage  
 That euere I am a-gast / now in myn age 1644  
 That I schal leede now so merie a lyf [leaf 266]  
 So delicat with-oute woo & stryf  
 That I schal han myn heuene in erthe here  
 ffor sythe that veray heuene is bouȝt so dere 1648  
 With tribulacyounys & greet penaunce  
 How schulde I thanne lyue in swich plesaunce  
 As alle weddede men doon with here wyuys  
 Come to the blis there Crist eterne on liue is 1652  
 This is myn drede & ȝe myne brethere tweye  
 Assoylyth me this questioun I preye  
 ¶ Iustinus whiche that hatith his folya  
 Answerde a-noon ryȝt in his Iaperye 1656  
 And for he wolde his longe tale abregge  
 He wolde non autorite a-legge  
 But seyde sere so there be noon obstakele  
 Othir than this god of his heye mirakele 1660  
 And of his mercy may so for ȝow werche  
 That er ȝe han ȝoure ryȝt of holy cherche  
 ȝe may repente of weddede manys lyf  
 In whiche ȝe se ther is no woo ne stryf 1664  
 And ellis god for-beede but he sente  
 A weddede man hym grace to repente  
 Wel ofte rathere than a sengle man  
 And therefore syre the beste reed þat I can 1668

Dispeyre 3ow not but hauyth in memorye  
 Perauntir sche may been 3oure purgatorye  
 Sche may been goddis meene & goddys whippe  
 Thanne schal 3oure soule vp to heuene skyppe 1672  
 Swiftere than an arwe out of a bowe  
 I hope to god here aftyr 3e schul knowe  
 That ther is non so greet felycite  
 In maryage ne neuere mor schal be 1676  
 That 3ow schal lette of 3oure saluacioun  
 So that 3e vse as skil is & resoun  
 The lustis of 3oure wyf attemprely  
 And that 3e plesse hire nat to amourosly 1680  
 And that 3e kepe 3ow ek from othere synne  
 Myn tale is doon for myn wit is thenne  
 Byth not a-gast heere-of myn brothir dere [leaf 266, back]  
 But let vs wadyn <sup>1</sup>out of this mateere [<sup>1</sup> o corrected] 1684  
 The wyf of bathe 3if 3e han vndyrstonde  
 Of maryage which 3e han on honde  
 Declarid hath ful wel in lytyl space  
 ffaryth now weel god haue 3ow in his grace 1688  
 And with that word this Iustyne & his brothir  
 They take here leue & eche of hem of othir  
 ffor whan they sagh that it muste needis be  
 They wroughte so sly & wys tretee 1692  
 That sche this mayde which pat Mayus hyghte  
 As hastyly as euere sche myghte  
 Schal weddede been on to this Ianuarye  
 I trowe it weere to longe now to tarye 1696  
 3if I 3ow tolde of euery scrit & bond  
 By which that sche was feffyde in his <sup>2</sup>lond [<sup>2</sup> l corrected]  
 Or for to herkene of hire ryche aray  
 But fynally is comyn the day 1700  
 That to the cherche bothe be they went  
 ffor to resceyue the holy sacrement  
 forth comyth the prest with stole a-bout his nekke  
 And bad hire be lyk sarra & rebekke 1704

In wisdam & in trouthe of maryage  
 And seyde his orysounnys as is vsage  
 And crouchith hem & bit god schulde hem blysse  
 And made al sikyr I-nough *with* holynesse 1708  
 Thus been they weddit with solempnetee  
 And at the laste sittyth he & sche  
 With othere worthi folk vp on the deys  
 Al ful of Ioye & blisse is the paleys 1712  
 And ful of instrumentis & of vitayle  
 The moste deynteuons of al Itaylle  
 By-forn hem stood swich instrument of soun  
 That Orpheus nor<sup>1</sup> Thebes Amphiouan [*r corrected*] 1716  
 Ne made neuere swich a melodye  
 At euery cours þan cam loud menstralsye  
 That neuere trumped Ieob for to heere  
 Ne Theodomas 3it half so cleere 1720  
 At Thebes whan the Citee was in doute [*leaf 207*]  
 Bacus the wyn hem shynketh alle a-boute  
 And venus laugheth vp-on euery wyght  
 ffor Ianuarye bycomyn was hire knyght 1724  
 And wolde bothe asaye hise corage  
 In liberte & ek in maryage  
 And with hire fyr brond in hire han<sup>d</sup> a-boute  
 Daunceth by-fore the bryde & al the route 1728  
 And certeynly I dare ryȝt wel sey this  
 Ymeneus / that god of weddyng is  
 Saw neuere his lyf / so merye a weddede man  
 Hold thow thyn pees / thow poete Marcian 1732  
 That wrytist vs that ilke weddyng murye  
 Of hire Philologie / & hym mercurie  
 And of the song that the Musys sunge  
 To smal is bothe thi penne & ek thyn tunge 1736  
 ffor to discryue of thyn maryage  
 Whan tender ȝouthe haue weddit stoupynge age  
 There is swych myrthe It may not been I-wretyn  
 Assayeth it ȝoure self thanne may ȝe wetyn 1740

3if that I lye or noon / in this matyre  
 Mayus that sit with / so benynge a cheere  
 Hire to byholde it semede fayrye  
 Queen Ester lokede neuere with swich an eye 1744  
 On Assure / so meke a lok hath sche  
 I may 3ow nat deuyse al hure beutee  
 But thus meche of hire beute telle I may  
 That sche was lyk the bryzte morwe of may 1748  
 fful fyld of alle beute & of plesaunce  
 This Ianewarye is rauyst in a traunce  
 At euery tyme he lokede on hire face  
 But in his herte he gan hire manace 1752  
 That he that nyght in armys wolde hire streyne  
 Hardere than euere parys dede Eleyne  
 But natheles 3it hadde he greet pitee  
 That ilke nyzt offendyn hire muste hee 1756  
 And thouzte allas o tendere creature  
 Now wolde god 3e myzte wel endure  
 Al myn corage it is so scharp & keene [leaf 267, back]  
 I am a-gast 3e schul it not susteene 1760  
 But god for-beede þat I dede al myn myzt  
 Now wolde god<sup>1</sup> that it were waxe nyght [<sup>1</sup> first good]  
 And that the nyzt / wolde lastyn euere mo  
 I wolde that al this peple were a-go 1764  
 And fynally he doth al his labour  
 As he best myghte / sauynge his honour  
 To haste hem from the meete in subtyl wyse  
 The tyme cam that resoun was to ryse 1768  
 And aftyr that men daunce / & drynkyn faste  
 And spicis al aboute the hous they caste  
 And ful of ioye & blysse is euery man  
 Alle but a squier hyte Damyan 1772  
 The whiche carf by-fore þ<sup>e</sup> knyght manye a day  
 He was rauysschd on his lady May  
 That for the verray payne he was nygh wood  
 Almost he schulde a swounnede as he stod 1776

So soore hath venus hurt him with hire brond  
 As that sche bar daunsynge in hire hand<sup>1</sup> [<sup>1</sup> a partly altered to o]  
 And to here bed they wentyn hastyly  
 Na moore at this tyme speke I 1780  
 But there I leete hym weepe I-nogh & pleyne  
 Tyl frosche may wele rewyn on his peyne  
 O perylous fyr þat in the bed straw bredyth Auctor  
 O famulier fo that his seruise beedith 1784  
 O seruaunt traitour false homeli hewe  
 Lyk to the neddere in bosum sly ontrewē  
 God schilde vs alle from ȝoure aqueyntaunce  
 O Ianuarie dronkyn in plesaunce 1788  
 In mariage se how thyn damyan  
 Thyn owene squyer & thyn bore man  
 Entendyth for do the velanye  
 God graunte the thyn homely fo tespye 1792  
 ffor in this world is wersse pestelence  
 Than homely foo alwey in thyn presence  
 ¶ Parformede hath the sunne his ark dyurne  
 No lengere may the body of hym soiurne 1796  
 On thorisonte / as in that latitude [leaf 268]  
 Nigh with his mental that is derk & rude  
 Gan ouersprede Themysperie a-boute  
 ffor which departid is this blisful route 1800  
 ffrom Ianuarie with stant on euery syde  
 Hoom tyl here housis hastily they ryde  
 Where as they don here thyngis as hem leste  
 And whan they saw here tyme goon to reste 1804  
 Soone aftyr that this lusty Ianuarye  
 Wol go to bedde he wil no lengere tarye  
 He drynkith Ipocras clarre<sup>2</sup> & vernage [2 First cleree]  
 Of spicis hoote tencresyn his corage 1808  
 And manye a letuarie hadde he ful fyn  
 Swych as the cursedē Monk daun Constantyn  
 Hath wretyn in his cursedē bok de Coitu  
 To ete hem alle he was no thyng eschu 1812



And to hise priue frendis thus seyde he  
 ffor godis loue as soone as it may bee  
 Let voydyn al this hous in curteys wyse  
 And they han doon ryzt as they wole deuyse 1816  
 Men drynkyn & the trauns drawe a-non  
 The bryde was brough a bedde as styлле as ston  
 And whan the bed was was with the prest I-blyssid  
 Out of the chambere hath euery wygh hym dressid 1820  
 And Ianuarye hath faste in armys take  
 His frosche May his paradys his make  
 He lullyth hire he kissith hire ful ofte  
 With thilke Brustelis of his berd on-softe 1824  
 Lyk to the skyn of houndfysch scharp as brere  
 ffor he was schaue al newe in his manere  
 He rubbith hire a-boute hire tendere face  
 And seide thus allas I mote trespace 1828  
 To ȝow myn spouse & ȝow gretly offende  
 Er tyme come that I schal doun dessende  
 But nathe-les consideryth this *quod* he  
 There wot no werkeman what so euere he be 1832  
 That may bothe werke weel & hastely  
 This wil been don at leyser parfitly  
 It is no fors how longe that we pleye [leaf 268, back]  
 In trewe wedlok couplit been we tweye 1836  
 And blyssede be the ȝok that we been inne  
 ffor in [oure] actis we mowe don no synne  
 A man may doon no synne with his wif  
 Ne hurte hym selue with his owene knyf 1840  
 ffor we han leue to pleye vs bi the lawe  
 Thus labourith he tyl the day gan dawе  
 And thanne he takyth a soppe in fyn clarree  
 And vp ryzt in his bed thanne sittyth hee 1844  
 And aftyr that he song ful loude & clere  
 And kyste his wif & made wantoun cheere  
 He was al coltissh / ful of ragerye  
 And ful of Iargoun / as a flekkede pye 1848

The slakke skyn a-boute his nekke shakyth  
 Whil that he song so chuntyth he & crakyth  
 But god wot wat that May thoughte in hire herte  
 Whan sche hym say vp syttyn in his scherte 1852  
 In his nyght cappe & in his nekke lene  
 Sche preyseth nat his pleying worth a beene  
 Thanne seyde he thus myn reste wele I take  
 Now day is come I may no lengere waake 1856  
 And doun he leyde his heed & slep tyl pryme  
 And afterward whan that he saugh his tyme  
 Vp ryseth Ianuarie but frosche may  
 Held<sup>1</sup> hire chaumbere tyl the fourte day [<sup>1</sup> id corrected] 1860  
 As vsage is of wyuys for the beste  
 ffor euery labour sumtyme mote han reste  
 Or ellis longe may he not endure  
 This is to seyne no lyuys creature 1864  
 Be it of fysch or bryd or beste or man  
 ¶ Now wele I speke of woful Damian  
 That languyssep for loue as 3e schal heere  
 Therfore I speke to hym in this mancere 1868  
 I seye O sely Damyan / allas  
 Answere to myn demaunde as in this cas  
 How schalt thou to thyn lady frosche May  
 Telle thyn wo / sche wele alwey seye nay 1872  
 Ek 3if thu speke sche wele thyn wo bi-wreye<sup>2</sup> [leaf 209]  
 God be thyn helpe I can no betere seye [<sup>2</sup> y corrected]  
 This syke Damyan in Venus fyr  
 So brennyth that he deyeth for desyr 1876  
 ffor which he put his lyf in auenture  
 No lengere myghte he in this lyf endure  
 But pryuyly a pennere gan he borwe  
 And in a lettere wrot he al his sorwe 1880  
 In maner of a compleynt or a lay  
 Vn-to his fayre frosche lady May  
 And in a purs of silk he hyng on his scherte  
 He hath it put & leyd it at his herte 1884

The mone that at noon was thilke day  
 That Ianuarie hath weddyd frosche May  
 In two of Taur was in-to Cancre glydyn  
 So longe hath Mayus in hire chaumbre a-bedyn 1888  
 As custome is vn-to these nobles alle  
 A bryde schal nat etyn in the halle  
 Til foure or thre dayis at the leste  
 I-passede been thanne lat hire goon to feste 1892  
 The fourte day compleet<sup>t</sup> from noon to noon  
 Wha<sup>1</sup> that the hie masse was I-doon [1 *first* What]  
 In halle sit this Ianuarye & May  
 As frosche as is the bryghte somerys day 1896  
 And so bi-fel how that this goode man  
 Remembrede hym vp-on Damyan  
 And seyde seyntemarye how may this be  
 That damyan entendith nat to me 1900  
 Is he ay sik or how may it be-tyde  
 Hise squyeris that stodyn there by syde  
 Excusede hym by cause of his siknesse  
 Whiche lettede hyn to don his busynesse 1904  
 Noon othir cause myȝt make hym to tarye  
 That me forthynkyth quod this Ianuarye  
 He is a gentil squyer by myn treuthe  
 ȝif that he deye it were harm & reuthe 1908  
 He is as wys descreet & as secre  
 As ony man I wot of hys degre  
 And therto manly & ek seruysable [leaf 269, back]  
 And for to been a thrifty man ryȝt able 1912  
 But aftyr mete as sone as euere I may  
 I wele myn self visite hym & eek May  
 To don hym al the confort þat I kan  
 And for that ilke word hym blyssede euery man 1916  
 That of his bounte & his gentillesse  
 he wolde so confortyn in seknesse  
 his squyer for it was a gentyl dede  
 Dame quod this Ianuarye tak good heede 1920

At aftyr mete 3e with 3ore women alle  
 Whan 3e han been in chaumbere out of this halle  
 That alle 3e go to se this damyan  
 Doth hym disport he is a gentil man 1924  
 And tellyth hym that I wele hym visite  
 Hauē I no thyng but restede me a lyte  
 And speede 3ow faste for I wele a-byde  
 Til that 3e slepe faste by myn syde 1928  
 And with that word he gan to hym to calle  
 A squyer that was marchale of his halle  
 And told hym serteyn wordis that he wolde  
 This frosche May hath streyt hire woye I-holde 1932  
 With alle hire wemen on to Damyan  
 Doun by his beddis syde sit sche than  
 Confortynge hym as goodly as sche may  
 This damyan whan that his tyme he say 1936  
 In secre wyse his purs & ek hīs bille  
 In which that he I-wrytyn hadde<sup>1</sup> his wille [<sup>1</sup> he erased]  
 Hath put In-to hire hand *with-outyn* moore  
 Saue þat he sikyth wondyr deepe & soore 1940  
 And softly to hire thus seyde he  
 Mercy & that 3e nat discouere me  
 ffor I am deed 3if that this thyng be kyd  
 This purs hat<sup>a</sup> sche / in *with* hire bosum hid 1944  
 And wente hyre woy 3e gete no more of me  
 But vn-to Ianuarye I-comyn is. sche  
 That on his. beddis. syde sat ful softe  
 And t<sup>a</sup>kyth hire & kysseth hire ful ofte 1948  
 And leyde hym doun to slepe & that a-non [leaf 270]  
 Sche feynede hire as that sche muste goon  
 There as 3e wot that euery man mot neede  
 And whan sche of that bille hath takyn heede 1952  
 Sche rente it al to cloutis at the laste  
 And in the pryue softly it caste  
 ¶ Who stodyeth now but fayre frosche May  
 A-doun by olde Ianuarye sche lay 1956

That slepte tyl that the co<sup>v</sup>he<sup>1</sup> hath hym a-wakyd  
 A-non he preyede hire to stryppen hire al nakyd [<sup>1</sup> *first coghe*]  
 He wolde of hire he seyde han sum plesaunce  
 And seyde hire clothis dide hym encumbraunce 1960  
 And sche obeyeth be hire lef or loth  
 But lest the *precious* folk be with me wroth  
 How that he wrouȝte I dar not to ȝow telle  
 Or whethir hire thoughte it *Paradys* or helle 1964  
 But heere I lete hem werke in hire wyse  
 Til euynsong rong & thanne they muste ryse  
 Were it by desteny or by auenture  
 Were it by influence or by nature 1968  
 Or constellacioun / that in swich estat  
 The heuene stood / that tyme fortunat  
 ffor to putte a bille / forth of venus werkis  
 ffor alle thynges hath tyme / as sey these clerkys 1972  
 To ony woman for to geete hire loue  
 I can not seye but greete god a-boue  
 That knowith that noon act is causeles  
 He deeme of alle / for I wil holde myn pees 1976  
 But soth is this how that this frossche May  
 Hath take swich emprescioun that day  
 Of pite of this ilke damyan  
 That from hire herte sche ne dryue can 1980  
 This <sup>2</sup>remembraunce for to doon hym ese [<sup>2</sup> *rme altered*]  
 Sertayn thouȝte sche / whom that this thyng displese  
 I rekke not / for here I hym assure  
 To loue hym best / of ony criature 1984  
 Thow he namore / hadde than his scherte  
 Lo pete rennyth sone / in gentyl herte  
 Heere may ȝe se how excellent fraunchise [*leaf 270, back*]  
 In wemen is whan they hem weel a-vise 1988  
 Sum tyraunt is as theree been manyon  
 That hath<sup>3</sup> an herte as hard as is a ston [<sup>3</sup> *h inserted*]  
 Which wolde a lat hym steruyn in the place  
 Wel rather than grauntyn hym hire grace 1992



And hem reioysyn in hire crewel pryde  
 And rekkyn nat to been An homytyde  
 This gentil May fulfylde of pitee  
 Ryȝt of hire owene hand makede sche 1996  
 In which sche grauntyth hym hire werra<sup>r</sup> grace  
 There lakkyth not but only day & space  
 Where that sche myȝte vn-to his lust suffyse  
 ffor it schal been ryȝt as ȝe wele deuyse 2000  
 And whan sche saugh hire tyme vp-on a day  
 To visite þis Damyan/ goth May  
 And subtyly this lettere doun sche threste  
 Vndyr his pilwe rede it ȝif him leste 2004  
 Sche takyth hym by the hand & harde<sup>1</sup> hym twyste  
 So secrely that no man of it wyste <sup>[<sup>1</sup> rde corrected]</sup>  
 And bad hym been al hol / & forth sche wente  
 To Ianuarye whan that he for hire sente 2008  
 ¶ Vp ryseth Damyan<sup>2</sup> the nexte morwe <sup>[<sup>2</sup> a corrected]</sup>  
 Al passede was his siknesse & his sorwe  
 And kymbith hym & proynyth<sup>3</sup> hym & pikyth <sup>[<sup>3</sup> a partly al-tered to o]</sup>  
 He dooth al th<sup>at</sup> hym luste & lykyth 2012  
 And ek to Ianuarye he goth as lowe  
 As euere dede a dogge for the bowe  
 He is so plesaunt on to euery man  
 ffor craft is al / ho so do it can 2016  
 That euery wyȝt is fayn to don hym good  
 And fully in his ladyis grace he stood  
 Thus leete I Damyan a-boute his neede  
 And in myn tale forth I wele procede 2020  
 ¶ Some clerkis seyn that felicitee  
 Stant in delyt / & therefore serteyn he  
 This noble Ianuarie with al his myȝt  
 In honeste wys as longith to a knyȝt 2024  
 Schop hym to lyue ful delyciously <sup>[leaf 271]</sup>  
 His housynge his a-ray as honestely  
 To his degre was makyd as a kyng is  
 A-mongis his othere honeste thyngis 2028

He made a gardyn wallede al wyth stoon  
 So fayr a gardyn woot I nowher noon  
 ffor out of doute I verrayly suppose  
 That he that wrot the romauns of the rose 2032  
 Ne coude of it the beute weel deuyse  
 Ne priapus ne myzte nat suffyse  
 Thow he be god of gardynys for to telle  
 The beaute of the gardyn & the welle 2036  
 That stood vndyr a laurer al wey grene  
 fful ofte tyme he pluto & his queene  
 Proserpen & al hire fayrye  
 Disportyn hem & makyn melodye 2040  
 A-boute that welle & dauncedyn as men tolde  
 This noble knyght this Ianuarye the olde  
 Swich deynte hath<sup>1</sup> // in it to walke & pleye [<sup>1</sup> h inserted:  
 i altered]  
 That he wele no wyzt suffere to bere þ<sup>e</sup> keye 2044  
 But he hym self / for of the smale wiket  
 He bar alwey of syluyr a Clyket  
 Of which whan that hym lykith he it on-schette  
 And whan he wolde paye his wyf hire dette 2048  
 In somyr sesoun thidyr wolde he go  
 And May his wyf & no wyzt but they two  
 And thyng that were nat doon a bedde  
 He in the gardyn parfornede hem & spedde 2052  
 And in this wyse manye a merye day  
 Lyuede this Ianuarye & frossche May  
 But wordely ioye may non alwey dure  
 To Ianuarie ne to non creature 2056  
 ¶ O sodeyn hap o fortune onstable  
 Lyk to the scorpioun so deceyuable  
 That flateris wythyn hed whan þou wolt styng  
 Thyn tayl is deeth thourgh thyn enuenymyng 2060  
 O bretil Ioye o sweete venym queynte  
 O Monstre that so subtyly canst peynte  
 Tynne ȝiftys vndyr colour of stedefastnesse [leaf 271, back]  
 That thow disseuyst bothe moore & lesse 2064

Why hast thou Ianuaris thus disseyuyd  
 That haddyst hym for thyn fulle frend resceyuyd  
 And now thou hast by-raft hym bothe his Iyen  
 ffor sorwe of which desyryth he to deyen 2068  
 Allas this noble Ianuarye free  
 A-myddde his lust & his prosperitee  
 Is waxen blynd / & that al sodeynly  
 He wepith & he waylyth pitously<sup>1</sup> [pitously corrected] 2072  
 And therewithal the fyr of Ielusye  
 Lest that his wif schulde falle in sum folye  
 So brente his herte that he wolde fayn  
 That sum man bothe hym & hire hadde slayn 2076  
 ffor neythir after his deth ne his lyf  
 Ne wolde he that sche weere loue ne wyf  
 But euere lyue as widewe in clothis blake  
 Soul as the turtle that hat lost hire make 2080  
 But at the laste after a monyth or tweye  
 His sorwe gan a-swage soth to seye  
 ffor whan he wiste / he may noon oþer bee  
 He paciently takyth his aduersite 2084  
 Saue out of doute he may not for-goon  
 That he was Ielous eueremor in oon  
 Whiche Ielusye it was so outrageous  
 That neythir in halle ne in noon othir hous 2088  
 Ne in non othir place neuere the mo  
 He nolde suffere hire neythir to ryde or go  
 But ȝif that he hadde hand on hire alwey  
 ffor which ful ofte wepith fresche May 2092  
 That lounth Damyan so benygne  
 That sche mot othir deye sodeynly  
 Or ellys sche mote han hym as hire leste  
 Sche wayth whan hire herte wolde breste 2096  
 ¶ Vp-on that othir syde ek damyan  
 By-comyn is the sorwefuleste man  
 That euere was for neythyr nyȝt ne day  
 Ne myȝte he speke a worde with frosche May 2100

As to his purpos of no swich mateere [leaf 272]  
 But If that Ianuarie muste it heere  
 That hadde an hand vp-on hire euere mo  
 But natheles by wrytyng too & froo 2104  
 And priue sygnys wiste he what sche mente  
 And sche knew ek the fyn of his entente  
 O Ianuarye what myzte it the a-vayle Auctor//  
 Thow myztist se as fer as schepis sayle 2108  
 ffor also good is blynd disseyuyd bee  
 As to be disseyuyd whan a man may see  
 Lo Argus which that hadde an hunderede eyen  
 ffor al that he coude poure or pryen 2112  
 3it was he blynd as god wot so been mo  
 That wenyn wisely that it be nat so  
 Passe ouyr is an ese I seye namoore  
 This frosche May that I spak of so 3ore 2116  
 In warm wex hath enpryntit the klyket  
 That Ianuarye<sup>1</sup> bar of that smale wiket [1 first Ianuerye]  
 By which in to his gardyn ofte he wente  
 And Damyas that knew al his entente 2120  
 The klyket countirfetid priuily  
 There nys no more to seye but hastily  
 Sum wondyr bi this cliket schal by-tyde  
 Which 3e schul here 3if 3e wele on byde 2124  
 O noble ouyde ful soth is seyde god wot Auctor  
 What sleyzte is it thow it be longe & hoot  
 That he nyle it fynde out in sum manere  
 By Piramus & Tisbee / may men leere 2128  
 Thow they were kept ful longe streyt ouyral  
 They been a-cordit rounynge thorw a wal  
 Ther' no with koude a founde swich a slyght  
 But now to purpos er than dayis eyghte 2132  
 Were passed er the monyth of Iuil<sup>2</sup> be-fel [2 uil corrected]  
 That Ianuarie hath cau3t so greet a wyl  
 Thour eggyng of his wif hym for to pleye<sup>3</sup> [3 ye corrected]  
 In his gardyn & no wight but thy tweye 2136

That in a morwe vn-to this May sente hee  
 Rys vp myn wyf myn loue myn lady free  
 The turtel voys is herd myn douwe sweete [leaf 272, back]  
 The wyntir is goon with hise reynys weete<sup>1</sup> [1st sweete]  
 Come forth with thynne eyne columbyn 2141  
 Hou fayrere been thynne brestis than is wyn  
 The gardyn is enclosede al a-boute  
 Come forth myn leue spouse out of doute 2144  
 Thow hast me wounded in myn herte o wyf  
 No spot of the ne knowe I al myn lyf  
 Come forth & lat vs takyn oure disport  
 I cheese the for Myn wif & myn confort 2148  
 Sweche olde lowede wordys vsede he  
 On Damyan a signe made sche  
 That he schulde go bi-forn with his Cliket  
 Damyan hath thanne openid the weket 2152  
 And in he sterte & that in swich manere  
 That no wyght myghte it wetyn nothir I-here  
 And style he sit vndyr a busch a-noon  
 This Ianuarie as blynd as is a ston 2156  
 With Mayus in his hand no wyzt mo  
 In to his frosche gardyn is go  
 And clapte to the weket sodeynly  
 Now wyf he seyde heere nys but thow & .I. 2160  
 That art the creatour that I best loue  
 ffor by that lord that sit in heuene a-boue  
 Leuere I hadde to deyin on a knyf  
 Than 3ow offendyn trewe deere wyf 2164  
 ffor godys sake thynk how I the chees  
 Nought for no coueytyse douteles  
 But only for the loue I hadde to the  
 And thow that I be old & may not se 2168  
 Beth to me trewe & I telle 3ow whi  
 Thre thyngis certis schul 3e wynne per-by  
 ffyrst loue of crist & to 3oure self honour  
 And al myn eritage toun & tour 2172



I 3eue it 3ow makyth charteris as 3ow leste  
 This schal been don to morwe er sunne reste  
 So wysely myn soule good brynge to blysse  
 I prey 3ow fyrst in couenau[n]t 3e me kysse 2176  
 And thow that I be Ialous wite me noght [leaf 273]  
 3e been so deepe enpryntid in myn thought  
 That whan that I considere 3oure beute  
 And therwithal the onlikely elde of me 2180  
 I may not certis thow I schulde deye  
 fforbeere to been out of 3oure cumpaynye  
 ffor verray loue this is with-outyn doute  
 Now kys me wif & lat vs rome a-boute 2184  
 This frosche may whan sche these wordys herde  
 Benyngnely to Ianuarye answerde  
 But fyrst & forward sche be-gan to wepe  
 I haue quod sche a soule for to kepe 2188  
 As wel as 3e & also my honour  
 And of myn wyfhod <sup>1</sup>theilke tendir flour [1 h altered]  
 Whiche that I haue assurede in 3oure hond  
 Whan that the prest to 3ow the body bond 2192  
 Wherefore I wele answer in this manere  
 By the leue of 3ow myn lord so deere  
 I preye to god that neuere dauwe þ<sup>e</sup> day  
 That I ne sterve as foule as woman may 2196  
 3if euere I do on to myn kyn that schame  
 Oþer ellys I enpeyre so myn name  
 That I be fals / & if I do that lak  
 Do strepe me & putte me in a sak 2200  
 And in the nexte ryuer do me drenche  
 I am a gentil woman & no wenche  
 Whi speke 3e thus but men been euere vntrewe  
 And women haue repref of 3ow ay newe 2204  
 3e can noon othir cuntenauns I leue  
 But speke to vs of onthrift & repreue  
 And with that word sche saw where Damyan  
 Sat in the busch & coghe sche be-gan 2208

And with hire fyngir signis made sche  
 That Damyan schulde clymbe vp on a tre  
 That chargede was with freut & vp he wente  
 ffor verrayly he knew al hire entente 2212  
 And euery signe that sche coude make  
 Wel bet than Ianuarye hire owene make  
 ffor in a lettere sche hadde tolde hym al [leaf 273, back]  
 Of this matire how he werchin schal 2216  
 And thus I leete hym sitte vp on the pyrye  
 And Ianuarye & May romynge merie  
 ¶ Bryzt was the day & blev the fyrmament  
 Phebus hath of gold hise stremys doun sent 2220  
 To gladyn euery flour with his gladnesse  
 He was that tyme in gemynys as I gesse  
 But lytyl from his declinacioun /  
 Of Cancer Iouis exaltacioun 2224  
 And so byfel that bryzte morwe tyde  
 That in that gardyn · in the ferthere syde  
 Pluto that is kyng of fayrye  
 And manye a lady in his cumpainygnye<sup>1</sup> [1 nyg corrected]  
 folwyng the wyf the queen Proserpyne  
 Eche after othir right as ony lyne  
 Whil that sche gaderede flourys in the mede  
 In Claudian 3e may the storijs rede 2232  
 How in his gr<sup>e</sup>sely carte he hire sette  
 This kyng of fayrye thanne a-doun hym sette  
 Vp-on a benche of turuys frosche & greene  
 And ryght a-non thus seyde he to his queene 2236  
 ¶ Myn wyf quod he there may no man sey nay  
 Thexperience so preuyth euery day  
 The tresoun / which that women doon to man  
 Ten hunderede thousent tellyn I can 2240  
 Notable of 3oure ontrouthe & brotilnesse  
 O salamon<sup>2</sup> wys & rycheeste of rychesse [2 ? salomon]  
 fful fyld of sapience & of wordely glorie  
 fful worthi been thyne wordis to memorie 2244

To euery witht that wit & resoun can  
 Thus preyseþ he 3it the bounte of man  
 A-mongis a thousent men 3it fond I oon  
 But of wemen alle fond I noon 2248  
 Thus seyde þ<sup>e</sup> kyng þat knowith 3oure wikkedenesse  
 And Ihesus<sup>1</sup> filyus Syrac as I gesse [1 MS Ihe]  
 Ne spekyth of 3ou but selde reuerence  
 A wylde fyr & corrupt pestylence 2252  
 So falle vp-on 3oure bodyis 3it tonyght [leaf 274]  
 Ne se 3e nat this honorable knyght  
 By cause allas that he is blynd & old  
 His owene man schal make him Cokewold 2256  
 Lo heere he sit the lecchour in the tree  
 Now wele I grauntyn of myn mageste  
 On-to this olde blynde worthi knyght  
 That he schal han a-3yn hie eyen sight 2260  
 Whan that his wyf wolde don hym vilenye  
 Thanne schal he knowe al hire harloterye  
 Bothe in repref of hire & of othere mo  
 3e shal / quod Proserpyne wol 3e so 2264  
 Now by myn moderys syris soule I swere  
 That I schal 3eue hire sufficioun[t] answer  
 And alle women aftyr for hire sake  
 That thow they ben in ony gilt I-take 2268  
 With face bold they schuln hem self excuse  
 And bere hem doun that wolde hem accuse  
 ffor lak of answeere non of hem schal deye  
 Al hadde men seyn a thyng with bothe hise eyen 2272  
 3it schul we wemen visage it hardely  
 And weepe & swere & chyde subtyly  
 So þat 3e men schul been as lewede as gees  
 What rekkith me of 3oure autoriteis 2276  
 I wot wel that this Iew this Salamon<sup>2</sup> [2 altered to Salomon]  
 ffond of vs wemen folis many on  
 But thow he ne fond no good woman  
 3it hath there foundyn manye a nothir man 2280

women ful trewe ful goode & vertuous  
 witnesse that dwelle in crystis hous  
 with martyrdom thy preuyn here constau[n]ce  
 The romayn geestis ek makyn remembraunce 2284  
 Of manye a verray trewe wyf also  
 But sire be nat wroth / al be it so  
 Thow that he seye he fond no good woman  
 I prey ȝow takyth the sentense of the man 2288  
 He mente thus that in souereyn bountee  
 Nis noon but god that sit in trynitee  
 ¶ Ey for verray god that is but on [leaf 274, back]  
 What make ȝe so meeche of salamon 2292  
 What thow he made a temple godys hous  
 What thow he weere ryche & glorious  
 So maade he ek a temple of false goddis  
 How myȝte he don a thyng that moore forbodyn is 2296  
 Parde as fayre as ȝe his name enplaystre  
 He was a lechour & an ydolastere  
 And in his elde he verray god for-sok  
 And ȝif god ne hadde as seyth the bood 2300  
 I sparede for his faderis sake he schulde  
 Hauē lost his regne rathere than he wolde  
 I sette ryght noght at<sup>1</sup> al the vilanye [1 ? for at]  
 That ȝe of women wryte a Botyrflye 2304  
 I am a woman nedis muste I speke  
 Or ellis swelle tyl myn herte breke  
 ffor sithyn he seyde we been Iangleressis  
 As euerre mote I brouke mynne tressis 2308  
 I schal nat spare for non curteysye  
 To speke hym harm that wolde hym vilanye  
 Dame quod this pluto be no lengere wroth  
 I ȝeue it vp but sithe I swor myn oth 2312  
 That I wolde graunte hym his syghte ageyn  
 Myn word schal stonde I werne ȝow certeyn  
 I am a kyng it sit me not to lye  
 And I quod sche a quen of fayrye 2316

Hire answer schal sche han I vndyr-take  
 Lat vs no moore wordis hereof make  
 ffor sothe I wele no lengere 3ow contrarye  
 ¶ Now lat vs turne a-geyn to Januarye 2320  
 That in the gardyn with his fayre May  
 Syngith ful muriere than the popyniay  
 3ow loue I best & schal & othir noon  
 So longe a-boute the aleyis is he goon 2324  
 Til he was comyn a-geyn thilke pirie  
 Where as this Damyan sittyth ful merye  
 And hye a-mong the frossche leuys grene  
 This frosche may that is so bryzt & schene 2328  
 Gan for to sike & seyde allas myn syde [leaf 275]  
 Now sire quod sche for ough that may be-tyde  
 I muste han of the perys that I se  
 Or I mot deye so sore longith me 2332  
 To etyn of the smale perys grene  
 Help for hire loue that is / of heuene queene  
 I telle 3ow weel a woman In myn plyt  
 May han to freut so greet an apetyt 2336  
 That sche may deyen but sche of it haue  
 Allas quod he that I ne hadde here a knaue  
 That coude clymbe allas allas quod he  
 That I am blynd 3a sere no fors quod sche 2340  
 But wolde 3e vouche saf for godis sake  
 The pirie inwith 3oure armys for to take  
 ffor weel I wot that 3e mystroste me  
 Thanne schulde I klymbe wel I-nough quod sche 2344  
 So I myn foot myzte sette vp-on 3oure bak  
 Certys quod he ther-on schal been no lak  
 Myghte I 3ow helpyn with myn herte blod  
 He stoupede down & on his bak sche stod 2348  
 And caughte hire by a twyste & vp sche goth  
 Ladyis I preye 3ow pat 3e been nat wroth  
 I can nat glose I am a rude man  
 And sodeynly a-noon this Damyan 2352



Gan pullyn vp the smok & in he throng  
 And whan that pluto saw this greete wrong  
 To Ianuarye he 3af a-geyn his syght  
 And maade hym se as wel as euere he myght 2356  
 And whan that he hadde cau3t his s3zt a-geyn  
 Ne was there neuere man of thyng so fayn  
 But on his wyf his thou3t was euere mo  
 Vp to the tre he caste his eyen two 2360  
 And saw that Damyan his wyf hadde dressed  
 In swich maner it may not been expressed  
 But 3if I wolde speke vncurteysly  
 And vp he 3af a roryng & a cry 2364  
 As doth the modyr whan the schild schal deye  
 Out help allas / harrow he gan to crye  
 O stronge lady stoore what dost thou [lean 275, back]  
 And sche answerde sire what eylyth 3ow 2368  
 Hauyth pacience & resoun in 3oure mynde  
 I haue 3ow holpyn on bothe 3oure eyen blynde  
 Vp peril of myn soule I schal not lyen  
 As me was tau3t to hele with 3oure eyen 2372  
 Was no thyng bet to makyn 3ow to see  
 Than strogele<sup>1</sup> with a man vp on a tree [1 first strugele]  
 God wot I dede it with ful good entente  
 Strogele quod he / 3a algate in it wente 2376  
 God 3eue 3ow bothe on schamys deth to deyen  
 He swyuede the I say it with mynne ey3en  
 And ellis be I hangid bi the hals  
 Thane is quod sche myn medecyn al fals 2380  
 ffor certeynly 3if that 3e my3te see  
 3e wolde not seyn these wordys vn-to me  
 3e han sum glemesyng & no parfyte syght  
 I se quod he as weel as euere I my3t 2384  
 Thankyd be god with bothe myne eyen two  
 And bi myn treuthe me thynkyth he dede p<sup>e</sup> soo  
 3a mape mape good sere quod sche  
 This thank haue I for I maade 3ow to se 2388

Allas quod sche that euere I was so kynde  
 Now dame quod he lat al passe out of mynde  
 Come doun myn lyf & If I haue myssayd  
 God helpe me so as I am euele a-payid 2392  
 But by myn fadyr soule I wende haue seyn  
 How that this Damyen hadde by the leyn  
 And that thyn smok hadde leyn vp-on his brest  
 3a sere quod sche 3e may wene<sup>1</sup> as 3ow lyst [1 ne altered]  
 But sere a man that wakyth out of slep  
 He may not sodeynly takyn kep  
 Vp-on a thyng ne seen it parfytly  
 Til that he be a-dawed verrayly 2400  
 Rygh so a man that longe hath blynd ybe  
 Ne may not sodeynly so weel I-see  
 ffyrst whan his syzte is come newe ageyn  
 As he that hath a day or too I-seyn [1 leaf out of Camb. MS]  
 [Tylle þat youre sizt y-stabled by a while [Sloane 1685,  
 þere may fulle many a sizt you be-gyle leaf 102, back]  
 By ware I prey you for by heuen kynge  
 Fulle many a man weneth to see a thyng 2408  
 And hit ys aȝt an opere þan hit semyth  
 he mysse conceyueth mysse demeth  
 And with þat worde she lepe doun of þat tre  
 Thys Ianuarye who was glade but she 2412  
 he kyssith and clypythe hir fulle ofte  
 And on hir wombe he strokethe hir fulle softe  
 And to hys palys home he hathe hir ladde  
 Nowe gode men I prey you to be glad 2416  
 Thus endethe here my tale of Ianuarye  
 God blesse vs and his modir/ Seynt Mary Amen] [Sloane 1685  
 extract  
 ends]

[*Harl. MS 7335, on leaf 129.*]

[b     y goddes mercy seide oure ost tho  
        Now swich a wif y preye god kepe me fro     2420  
        lo swiche sleighthes and subtilites  
 In wommen ben for ay as besy as bees  
 Ben they vs sely men for to deseyue  
 And from a sothe euere wil they weyue     2424  
 Bi this marchauntis tale hit preueth wel  
 And natheles as trewe as ony steel  
 I haue a wif thogh that she poore be  
 But of hir tonge a labbyng shrewe is she     2428  
 And yit she hath an heepe of vices moo  
 Ther-of no fors let al swiche thynges goo  
 But wite ye what in counseil be it seide  
 Me reweth sore y am vn to here teyed     [leaf 129, back]     2432  
 ffor and y shulde rekene euery vice  
 which that she hath y-wis y were to nyse  
 And cause whi it shulde reported be  
 And told to here of sume of this compaignie     2436  
 Of whom it nedith nat for to declare  
 Syn wommen konnen oute swiche chaffare  
 And ek my wit sufficeth not ther too  
 To tellen al wherfore my tale is do]     2440

## GROUP F. FRAGMENT VII.

### § 1. THE SQUIRE'S HEAD-LINK.

#### CAMBRIDGE MS.

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[*Harl. MS 7335, on leaf 129, back.*]

[Squyer come ner if it youre wille be	
And sey sumwhat of loue for certes ye	
Konnen ther on as moche as ony man	
Nay sere quod he but sweche thyngt as y can	4
With hertly wille for y wil not rebelle	
Ageyn youre lust a tale wol y telle	
haue me excusid if y speke a mys	
Mi wille is good and lo my tale is this]	8

[Here bygynneth þe tale .

[Sloane 1685,  
leaf 78]

[ A T Sarray in þe londe of Sarcarye [leaf 78, back]  
 There dwelt / a kyng þat weryd Russye  
 Thouȝe whiche þere dyede many a duȝty man  
 Thys noble kyng was clepyd Kambynskan 12  
 whiche in his tyme was of so grete rennoun  
 That þer was nouthir / in regioun  
 So excellent a lord / in alle þinge  
 Hym lakkith nouȝt þat longith to a kyng 16  
 As of þe Cite whiche he was borne  
 he kepte hys lawe to whiche þat he was sworne  
 And þerto he was hardy wyse & ryche  
 And pitouse & Iuste alle wey yliche 20  
 Sothe of / hys worde benygne & honorable  
 Of / his corage as eney centre stable]  
 13on[ge fresshe stronge in armes desyrours]  
 As on[y bachelere of alle hys hous]  
 A fayr per[son he was & fortunat]  
 And kepte a[lle wey so wele ryalle estate]  
 That there na[s nouthir suche a n<sup>e</sup> þere man]  
 This noble kyng [of Tartre þis Kambynskan] 28  
 Hadde two sons on [Eltheta his wif]  
 Of whiche the eldeste [hiȝt Algarsife]  
 That oþer sone was clepid [Camballo]  
 A doughtyr hadde this worth[y kyng also] 32  
 Tha<sup>t</sup> 2 yngeste was & hyghte Canace [2 ha<sup>t</sup> corrected]  
 But for to telle ȝow al hire beautee  
 It lyth not in myn tunge nyn myn kunnyng  
 I dar nat vndyrtake so high a thyng 36

[1 Camb. MS, leaf  
277; part of leaf  
torn off; Alled-in  
here from Sl. 1685]



Myn engelysch is ek insufficient  
 It muste be a Rethor excellent  
 That coude hise colouris / longynge for that art  
 3if he schulde discryuyn euery part 40  
 I am non schich I mot speke as I can  
 And so by-fil that this Cambynskan  
 Hath twenty wyntyr boryn his diademe  
 As he was wone ffrom 3er to 3eer I deme 44  
 He leet the feste of his natyuitee  
 Doon cryen thour Sarray his Citee  
 [The last Idus of Marche aftir þe yere [Sloane 1685, leaf 79]  
 Phebus þe Sonne fulle Iolyf was & clere 48  
 ffor he was nyh · his exaltacion  
 In martes face and his mancion  
 In aries þe Coloryk þe hoot signe  
 fful lusty was þe weder' & benygne 52  
 ffor whiche þe foules ayeyn þe son shene  
 what for þe seson and þe yonge grene  
 fful lowde songe hir affeccions  
 hem semyd þei hade goten hem proteccions 56  
 A-eyne þe swerde of wynter kene & Colde  
 This Kambynskan of whiche I haue you tolde  
 In riall vestement syt on hys deys  
 with a Dyademe full hi3e in his paleys 60  
 And holte his feste sollempne & so riche  
 þat in þis worlde ne was pere none hit lyche  
 Of whiche yf I · shalle telle alle þe array  
 That wolde hit occupie a somers day 64  
 And eke hit nedyth not to devise  
 At euery cours þe ordre of h]ere seruys [Cambr. MS, lf 277, bk]  
 [I wolle not telle of her straun]ge sewys  
 [Ne of here swannes ne of<sup>1</sup>] here heirounnsewis [<sup>1</sup> This line  
wanting in Sl.  
1685, half is  
supplied from  
Harl. 1758,  
leaf 68, back]  
 [Eke in þat londe as tel]lyn kny3tis olde  
 [There ys some mete þat ys fulle] deynte holde  
 [That in þis l]ond men reche of it but smal  
 [There ys] no man that may reportyn al 72

[I wol] not taryin 3ow for it is prime <sup>1</sup>	[ <sup>1</sup> a prime corrected]	
[And] for it is no freut / but los of tyme		
Vn-to myn fyrste I wele han myn recours		
And so be-fel that aftyr the thredde cours		76
Whil that this kyng sat thus in his nobleye		
Herkenynge his mynstraß here thyngis pleye		
By-forn hym at the bord deliciously		
In at the halle dore al sodeynly		80
There cam a knyght vp on a stede of bras		
And in his hand a brood myroure of glas		
Vp on his thumbe he bar of gold a ryng		
And by his syde a nakede swerd hangyng		84
And vp he ridyth to the heye bord	[leaf 278]	
In al the halle ne was there spokyn a word		
ffor merueyle of this knyght to be-holde		
fful besily they wayte 3ynge & olde		88
This straunge knyzt that cam thus sodeynly		
Al armede saue his hed richely		
Saluyth kyng & queen & lordis alle		
By ordere as the setyn in the halle		92
With so heigh reuerence & obeysaunces		
As weel in his speche as in hise cuntenaunces		
That Gaweyn with his olde curteysye		
Thow he weere comyn a3en out of fayrye		96
Ne coude hym not amendyn / with a word		
And aftyr thys by-fore the heye bord		
He wyth a manly voys seyth his message		
Aftyr the forme vsed in hise age <sup>2</sup>	[ <sup>2</sup> age corrected]	100
With-outyn vice of sillable or of lettere		
And for his tale schulde seme the bettre		
Acordau[n]t to hise wordis was hise chere		
As techith the art of speche hem that it lere		104
Al be that I can not soune his style		
Ne can not clymbyn ouyr so hegh a style		
3it seye i this as to comune entent		
Thus meche a-mountyth al that euere he ment		108

ȝif it so be þat I haue it in mynde  
 He seyde þ<sup>e</sup> kyng of arabye & of ynde  
 Myn lige lord on this solempne day  
 Salueth ȝow as he best can or may 112  
 And sendyth ȝow in honour of ȝoure feste  
 By me þat am al redy to ȝouere heste  
 This steede of bras that esyly & wel  
 Can in the space of a day naturel 116  
 This is to seyne in foure & twenty ourys  
 Where so ȝow liste in drouȝte or ellis schouris  
 Beryn ȝoure body in-to euery place  
 To whiche ȝoure herte willyth for to pace 120  
 With-outyn wem of ȝow thour foul or fayr  
 Or ȝif ȝow leste to flien as hyghe in þ<sup>e</sup> ayr  
 As doth an egele whan hym lyste to soore [leaf 278, back]  
 This same steede schal bere ȝow euere moore 124  
 With-outyn harm tyl <sup>1</sup>ȝe been there ȝow lesten [<sup>1</sup> ? MS y or i  
corrected]  
 Thow that ȝe slepyn on his bak or restyn  
 And turne a-ȝen with wrythyng of a pyn  
 He that it wrouȝte it coude ful manye a gyn 128  
 He waytede ful manye a constelacioun  
 Er he hadde doon this operacioun  
 And knew ful manye a sel & manye a boond  
 ¶ This myrour ek that I haue in myn hond 132  
 Hath swich a myȝt that men may in it se  
 Whan there schal falle ony aduercite  
 Vn-to ȝoure regne / & to ȝoure self also  
 And opynly ho is ȝoure frend or <sup>2</sup>foo [<sup>2</sup> r corrected] 136  
 And ouyral this ȝif ony lady bryȝt  
 Hath set hire herte on ony maner wyȝt  
 ȝif he be fals sche schal his tresoun see  
 His newe loue & al his subtiletee 140  
 So opynly that ther schal nothyng hyde  
 Wherefore a-geyn this lusty somerys tyde  
 This myrour & this ryng<sup>3</sup> that ȝe may see [<sup>3</sup> g corrected]  
 He hath sent on-to myn lady Canacee 144

3oure excellent doughtyr that is here  
 Te vertu of the ryng 3if 3e wile heere  
 Is this that 3if hire luste it for to weere  
 Vp-on hyre thumbe or in hire purs it beere 148  
 There is no foul that flyeth vndyr the heuene  
 That sche ne schal weel vndyrstondyn his steuene  
 And knowe his menyng opynly & pleyne  
 And answer hym in his langage a-geyn 152  
 And euery gres that growyth vp on roote  
 Sche schal ek knowe & whom it schal don boote  
 Alle be hise woundys neeuere so deepe & wyde  
 This nakede swerd that hangyth by myn syde 156  
 Wich wertew hath that what man þ<sup>e</sup> smyte  
 Thouru out his arneur it wele byte  
 Were it as thikke as is a brauncheede ook  
 And what man is wounded with that strok 160  
 Schal neuere be hol tyl þat þou lest of grace [leaf 279]  
 To stroke hym with the plat / in þat place  
 There he is hurt this is as meche to seyn  
 3e moote with the plat swerd a-geyn 164  
 Stryke hym on the wounde & it wele close  
 This a verray soth with-oute glose  
 It faylyth not whil it is in 3oure hoolld  
 And whan this knyȝt hat thus his tale told 168  
 He rydyth out of halle & doun he lytyth  
 His steede whiche þat schon as sunne brighte  
 Stant in the court styлле as ony stoon  
 This knyght is to hise chambere lad a-noon 172  
 And is on arayed & to mete I-set  
 These presentis been ful ryally I-fet  
 This is to seyne the swyrd & the myrour  
 And born a-non in-to the hye tour 176  
 with serteyn offycerys<sup>1</sup> ordeynyd there fore [1 ys corrected]  
 And on to Canacee this ryng was bore  
 Solempnely ther sche sit at þ<sup>e</sup> table  
 But sikyrly with-outyn ony fable 180

The hors of bras that may not been remeuyd  
 It stant as it were to the ground I-glewyl  
 Ther may no man out of the place it dryue  
 ffor noon engyn of wyndas or palyue 184  
 And cause whi for they can not the craft  
 And therefore in the place they han it laft  
 Til that þe knyght hath taughte hem the manere  
 To voydyn hym as 3e schal after heere 188  
 ¶ Gret was the pres that swarmyth to & fro  
 To gauryn on this hors that standyth so  
 ffor it so high was & so brod & long  
 So wel proporciounyd for to been strong 192  
 Ryzt as it were a stede of lumbardy  
 Therto so horsely & so quyk of Iye  
 As it a gentil poleys Courser were  
 ffor certis from his tayl vn-to his eere 196  
 Nature ne art ne coude hym nat a-mende  
 In no degre as al the peple wende  
 But euere more here moste wondir was [leaf 279, back]  
 How that it coude goon & was of bras 200  
 And<sup>1</sup> was as fayr as al the peple seemede [1<sup>nd</sup> corrected]  
 Dyuers folk dyuersly they demyd  
 As<sup>2</sup> manye hedis as many wittis þere been [2<sup>s</sup> corrected]  
 They murmuredyn as don a swarm of been 204  
 And madyn skiH after here fantasyis  
 Rehersynge of these olde poetryis  
 And seydyn it was lik the pegasee  
 The hors that hadde wyngis for to flee 208  
 Or ellis it was þ<sup>e</sup> Grekis hors Synoun  
 That brouzte Troye to distruccioun  
 As men in these olde gestis reede  
 Myn herte quod on is eueremor in drede 212  
 I trowe some men of armys been þerinne  
 That schapin hem this cete for to wyne  
 It were right good that alle thynges were knowe  
 A nothir rounede to his felawe lowe 216



And seyde he lyede it is rathere lik  
 An apparence mad by *sum* Magyk  
 As Iogelouris pleye at these <sup>1</sup>festis greete<sup>1</sup> [<sup>1</sup>—<sup>1</sup> corrected:]  
 Of sundery doutis thus they Iangele & trete<sup>2</sup> [<sup>2</sup> trete corrected]  
 As lewede peple demyth comounly  
 Of thyngis that been mad more subtilly  
 Than they can in here louwedenesse *comprehende*  
 They demyn gladly to the baddere ende 224  
 And some of hem wonderedyn on the myrour  
 That born was vp in the hyghe tour  
 How men myztyn in it sweche thyngis see  
 A noþer answerde & seyde it may wel be 228  
 Naturelly by *compociciounys*  
 Of angles & of slygh *reflecciouns*  
 And seydyn þat in rome was swich on  
 They spoken of Alocen & Vituloun 232  
 And Aristotle þat wrytyn in here lyuys  
 Of queynte Mirouris & of *prospectyuis*  
 As knowyn they that han here bokys herd  
 And opere folk han wonderede on the swerd 236  
 That wolde partyn thour out euery thyng [leaf 230]  
 And fille in speche of Tholophus þe kyng  
 And of achilles with his queynte speere  
 ffor he coude with it bothe hele & dere 240  
 Rygh in swich wise as men myzte with the swerd  
 Of which ryzt now 3e han 3oure selue herd  
 They spekyn of sundery hardyng of metal  
 And spoke of medycynys therwith-al 244  
 And how & whanne it schulde I-hardit be  
 Whiche is vnknowe algate<sup>3</sup> on-to me [<sup>3</sup> to corrected]  
 Tho speke they of Canaceis ryng  
 And seydyn alle of that swych a wondyr thyng 248  
 Of craft of ryngis herde they neuere noon  
 Saue that he moyses & kyng salomon  
 Hadde a name of rounnyng in swich art  
 Thus seyth the peple & drawyn hem a part 252

But natheles some seydyn that it was  
 Wondyr to makyn oof fern aschyn glas  
 And 3it ne is glas lich aschyn of fern<sup>1</sup> [<sup>1</sup> fern corrected, from  
a lightly written fern  
in the margin]  
 But for they han knowyn it so fern  
 There-fore chesen hire Iangelyng & hire wondyr  
 As soore wonderyn some of on cause of 3oundyr  
 On ebbe on flod on gossomyr & on myst  
 And alle thynges tyl that the cause is wist 260  
 Thus Iangele they & deeme & deuyse  
 Til that þe kyng gan from his bord a-ryse  
 Phebus hath left the angle meridional  
 And 3it ascendyng was the beste royal 264  
 The gentyl lyoun with his aldryan<sup>2</sup> [<sup>2</sup> n corrected]  
 Whan that this tartre Cambynsca<sup>3</sup> [<sup>3</sup> ? MS Cambyuscan]  
 Ros from his bord þere that he sat ful hye  
 To-fore hym goth the loude menstralceye 268  
 Tyl he cam to hise chambere of parementis  
 There as they sounyn dyuerse Instrumentis  
 That is lyk an heuene for to here  
 Now daunceyn lusty venus chylderyn deere 272  
 ffor in the fych hire <sup>4</sup>lady sat ful hyghe [<sup>4</sup> l corrected]  
 And lokyn on hem with a frendely Iye  
 This noble kyng is set vp in his trone [leaf 280, back]  
 This stronge knyght / is<sup>5</sup> fet to hym ful sone [<sup>5</sup> Arat it] 276  
 And on the daunce he goth with Canacee  
 Here is the reuel & the Iolyte  
 That is nat able a dul man to deuyse  
 He muste haue knowe loue & his seruyse 280  
 And been a festelyche man as May  
 That schulde 3ow deuyse swich aray  
 Who coude tellen 3ow the forme of daunceis  
 So vncouth & so frosche cuntenauncis 284  
 Swich subtyl / lokyngis & dissimulyngis  
 ffor drede of Ialuse mennys aperceyvyngis  
 No man but lancelot & he is deed  
 There-fore I passe ouyr al this lustyhed 288

I seye namore but in this iolynesse  
 I leete hem tyl men to the soper dresse  
 The styward bit spicis for to hye  
 And ek the wyn in al this melodye 292  
 The vsscheris & the squyeris been I-gooun  
 The spicis & the wyn be comyn a-noon  
 They ete & d[r]ynke & whan this hadde an ende  
 Vn-to the temple as reson was they wende 296  
 The seruyse doun they soupyn al be day  
 What nedyth <sup>1</sup>me reherce al here a-ray [1 m corrected]  
 Eche man wiste wel þat a kyngis feste<sup>2</sup> [2 first e corrected]  
 Hath plente to meste & ek to leste 300  
 And deynteis moo than been to myn knowyng  
 At aftyr sopir goth this noble kyng  
 To seen this hors of bras with al the route  
 Of lordis & of ladyis hym a-boute 304  
 Swich wonderyng was on this hors of bras  
 That syn the greete sege of Troye was  
 Ne was there swich a wonderyng as was tho  
 There as men wonderedyng on an hors also 308  
 But finally this kyng askyth this knyght  
 The vertu of this courser & the myȝt  
 And preyede hym to telle his gouernauce  
 This hors anon be-gan to tryppe & daunce 312  
 Whan that this knyght leyde hand vp-on his regne [leaf 281]  
 And seyde sire there nys no moore to seyne  
 But whan thu lyste to ryde any where  
 ȝe mote trylle a pyn stant in his eere 316  
 Whiche I schal ȝow telle be-twyxe vs two  
 ȝe mote nemenyn hym to what place also  
 Or to wat cuntre þat thow lyste to ryde  
 And whan ȝe come there as ȝow leste abyde 320  
 Bydde hym discende & trylle a nothir pyn  
 ffor there lyth theeffect of al the gyn  
 And he wele doun descende & don ȝoure wille  
 And in that place he wele stonde styлле 324

Thow al the world the contrarye haddyn swore  
 He schal not thens been drawe ne bore  
 Or ȝif þou wit bidde hym thenys goon  
 Trille this pyn & he wele vanyche a-noon 328  
 Out of the syȝte of euery maneere wyȝt  
 And come a-geyn be it day or nyght  
 Whan that þou lystist to clepyn hym a-geyn  
 In swich a gyse as I schal to ȝow seyn 332  
 Bi-twixe ȝow & hym & that ful sone  
 Ride whan þou lyste there is no moore to doone  
 Enformede whan that kyng was of that knyght  
 And hath conseuyd in his wit a ryȝt 336  
 The manere & the forme of al this thyng  
 Thus glad & blythe this nobele kyng  
 Repeyrith to his reuel as by-foryn  
 The brydyl is in to the tour I-boryn 340  
 And kept a-mong hyse <sup>1</sup>Iewelys leue & deere [<sup>1</sup>ew corrected]  
 The hors vanyschit I not in what maneere  
 Out of hire syȝte ȝe gete no more of me  
 But thus I lete in lust & iolyte 344  
 This Cambiscan hese lordis festenyng  
 Tyl wol nygh þe day be-gan to sprynge

### Secunda pars

**T** He noryce of digestyoun the sleep  
 Gan on hem wyne & bad hem take kep 348  
 That muche drynk & labour wolde han reste  
 And with a galpyng mouth hem alle keste [<sup>1</sup>leaf 281, b: ck]  
 And seyde it was tyme to lye a-doun  
 ffor blood was in his domynacioun 352  
 Cherisshet blod naturys frend quod he  
 They thankyn hym galpyng bi too by thre  
 And euery wyght gan drawyn hym to his reste  
 As slep hem hadde they take it for the beste 356

Here dremys schul not been told for me  
 fful weere here heedys of fumositee  
 That causeth drem of whiche *pere* is no charge  
 They slepyn tyl it was pryme large 360  
 The moste part but it were Canacee  
 Sche was ful mesurable as wemen bee  
 ffor of hire fadyr hadde sche takyn leue  
 To gon to reste sone aftyr it was eue 364  
 Hire lyste not appallid for to bee  
 Nor on the morwe onfestelyche for to se  
 And slepte hire fyrste sleep & thanne a-wok  
 ffor swich a slep sche<sup>1</sup> in hire herte tok [1 ? MS e] 368  
 Bothe of hyre queynte ryng & hire Mirour  
 That twenty tyme sche<sup>2</sup> changede hire colour [2 ? MS schangede]  
 And in hire sleep ryzt for imprescioun  
 Of hire Mirour sche hadde a visioun 372  
 Where fore the sunne gan vp glyde  
 Sche clepede on hire maysteresse hire be syde  
 And seyde *pat* hire luste for to ryse<sup>3</sup> [3 s corrected]  
 These olde wemen that been gladly wyse 376  
 As is hire Maysteresse answerede hire a-non  
 And seyde madame *wheper* wele ze goon  
 Thus erly for the folk been alle at reste  
 I wele quod sche a-ryse for me leste 380  
 No lengere for to slepe & walke a-bouthe  
 Hire Maystresse clepid wemen a greet route  
 And vp they ryse weel a ten or twelue  
 Vp rysyth frossche Canace hire selve 384  
 As rody as brygh as doth the zonge sunne  
 That in the Ram is foure degreis vpronne  
 Noon heyere was he / whan sche redy was [leaf 282]  
 And forth sche walkyth esyly a pas 388  
 A-rayed aftyr the lusty sesoun soote  
 Lyztely for to pleye & walke on foote  
 Not but *with* fyue or sexe of hyre meyne  
 And in a trench forth in the park goth sche 392



The vapour which that from the erthe glod  
 Made the sunne to seme rody & brood  
 But natheles it was so fayr a syȝt  
 That it made alle here hertis for to lyȝt 396  
 That for the sesoun & the morwenȝe  
 And for the foulȝs that sche herde syȝe  
 ffor ryȝt a-noon she wiste what they mente  
 Ryȝt by here song & knew al here entente 400  
 The kn te<sup>1</sup> whi that eueri tale is told [? First knlte]  
 ȝif it be taryed tyl that lust be cold  
 Of hem that han it aftyr herkenyd ȝoore  
 The sauour passith euere lengere the moore 404  
 ffor fulsumnesse of his prolixite  
 And by the same resoun thynkyth me  
 I schulde to þ<sup>e</sup> knotte condescende  
 And makyn of hire walkyȝe sone an ende 408  
 ¶ A-myddē a tre fordreyed as whyt as chalk  
 As canascee was pleyȝe in hire walk  
 There sat a facoun ouyr hire heed ful hye  
 That with a pytous voys so gan to crye 412  
 That al the wode resounede of hire cry  
 I-beetyn hath sche hire self so pitously  
 With bothe hire wyȝis tyl the reede blood  
 Ran endelyȝ the tree there sche stood 416  
 And euere in on sche cryede al wey & schr[i]kte  
 And with hire bek hire seluyn so sche prykte  
 That pere nys tygre ne non so crewel beste  
 That dwellyth eythir in wode or in foreste 420  
 That nolde a wept ȝif that he weepe coude  
 ffor sorwe of hire sche shrikte alwey so loude  
 ffor there was neuere man ȝit on lyue  
 If that I coude a facoun weel dyscryue 424  
 That herde of swich a nothyr / ȝit/ of fayrnesse [leaf 282, bk]  
 As weel of plumage as of gentyllesse  
 Of schap & of al that myghte I-rekenede bee  
 A facoun peregryn thanne semeede sche 428

Of fremde lond / & eueremore as sche stood  
 Sche swounnyth now & now for lak<sup>1</sup> of blod [1 or lak corr.]  
 Tyl wel nygh is sche fallyn from the tree  
 This fayre kyngis doughtir Canacee 432  
 That on hire fyngyr bar the queynte ryng  
 Thour whiche sche vndyrstod weel euery thyng  
 That ony foul myghte in hise ledene seyn  
 And coude answeere in his ledene ageyn 436  
 Hath vndyrstonde what this facoun seyde  
 And wel nygh for the routhe almost sche deyede  
 And to the tre sche goth ful hastyly  
 And on this facoun lokyth pitously 440  
 And held hire lappe a-brod for well sche wyste  
 The facoun muste falle from the twyste  
 Whan that it swounnede next for lak of blood  
 A long while to waytyn hire sche stood 444  
 Til at the laste sche spak in this maneere  
 Vn-to the hauk as 3e schul aftyr here  
 ¶ What is the cause 3if it be for to telle  
 That 3e been in this furyal peyne of helle 448  
 Quod Canace vn-to this hauk a-boue  
 Is this for sorwe of deth or los of loue  
 ffor as I trowe these been causys two  
 That causyn most a gentyl herte wo 452  
 Of oper harm it needyth not to spekyn  
 ffor 3e 3oure self vp-on 3oure self ben wrekyng  
 Whiche prevyth weel that eythir loue or drede  
 Moot been enchesoun of 3oure crewel deede 456  
 Syn that I se non oper wight 3ow chace  
 ffor loue of god as doth 3oure self sum grace  
 Or what may been 3oure helpe for west nor est  
 Ne saugh I neuere er now no brid ne beste 460  
 That ferde with hym self so pitously  
 3e sle me wyth 3oure sorwe verrayly  
 I haue of 3ow so greet compassioun [leaf 223]  
 ffor godis loue come from the tre a-doun 464

And as I am kyngis doughtyr trewe  
 3if that I verrayly the cause knewe  
 Of 3oure deseese 3if it lay in myn mygh[t]  
 I wole amendyn it er it weere nyght 468  
 As wisely helpe me greete god of kynde  
 And erbis schal I ry3t I-nowe fynde  
 To heele with 3oure hurtis hastely  
 Tho schrykt this facoun moore 3it pitously 472  
 Than euere sche dede & fyl to grounde a-noon  
 And lith<sup>1</sup> a swounne ded lych a stoon [1 lith corrected]  
 Tyl canace hath in hire lappe hire take  
 Vn-to the tyme sche gan of swow a-wake 476  
 And after that sche of hire swow a-breyde  
 Rygh in hire haukys ledene thus sche seyde  
 That pete rennyth sone in gentyl herte  
 ffelynge his simylytud in peynys smerte 480  
 Is preuyd alday as men may it I-se  
 As weel by werk as by autorite  
 ffor gentyl herte kytheth gentillesse  
 I se weel 3e han of myn distresse 484  
 Compassioun myn fayre Canacee  
 Of verray womanly benygnetee  
 That nature in 3oure prynciples han I-set  
 But for noon hope for to fare the bet 488  
 But for to obeye vnto 3oure herte free  
 And for to makyn opere / be war by me  
 And bi the whelp chastysed is the lyoun  
 Rygh for that cause & for that conclusioun 492  
 Whil that I haue a leyser & a space  
 Myn harm I wele confesse er I pace  
 And euere whil that on hire tolde  
 That othir wepte as sche to watyr wolde 496  
 Tyl that the facoun bad hire to been styлле  
 And wyth a syk ry3t thus sche seyde hire tille  
 ¶ That I was brad allas that harde day  
 And fosterede in a roche of marbyl gray 500

So tenderly eylyth / it<sup>1</sup> eylede me [<sup>1</sup> t corrected] [leaf 283, back]  
 I nyste<sup>2</sup> not what was aduercyte [<sup>2</sup> y corrected]  
 Tyl I coude fle ful hye vndyr the skye  
 Tho dwellede a tercelet me faste bye 504  
 That semede weel of alle gentillesse  
 Al weere he ful of tresoun & falsenesse  
 It was so wrappid vndyr humble chire  
 And vndyr hewe of trouthe in swych maneere 508  
 Vndyr plesaunce & vndyr bisy pyne  
 That I not <sup>3</sup> cude a wend he coude feyne [<sup>3</sup> a word scratcht out]  
 So deepe in greyn he dyede his colourys  
 Ryȝt as a serpent hid hym vndyr flourys 512  
 Tyl he may seen his tyme for to byte  
 Rygh so this god of loue this ypocryte  
 Doth so hise sermonys & obeysauncis  
 And kepyth in semblaunt alle hise <sup>4</sup>cuntenauncys<sup>4</sup> [<sup>4</sup>—<sup>4</sup> corr.]  
 That sounnyn in to gentillesse of loue  
 As in a tounge is al the fayrenesse a-boue  
 And vndir is þ<sup>e</sup> cors swich as ȝe woot  
 Swich was this ypocryte bothe cold & hoot 520  
 And in this wise he seruede his entent  
 That saue the feend non wiste what he ment  
 Til he so longe hadde wepid & compleyned  
 And manye a ȝeer his seruyse to me feynyd 524  
 Tyl that myn herte to pitous & to nyce  
 Al innocent of his crounede malyce  
 ffor-fered of his deth as thoughte me  
 Vp-on hise othis & hise seuretee 528  
 Grauntede hym loue vp-on this condicioun<sup>5</sup> [<sup>5</sup> is condicioun corrected]  
 That euere more myn honour & renoun  
 Were sauȝd bothe priue & apert  
 This is to seyne that after his desert 532  
 I ȝaf hym al myn herte & al myn thought  
 God wot & he / þat operwyse noght  
 And tok his hert in chong of myn for ay  
 But soth is seyȝd goon sithe manye a day 536

A trewe wigh & a thef thynkyn nat oon  
 And whan he saugh the thyng so fer a-goon  
 That I hadde grauntede fully myn looue [leaf 284]  
 In swich a gise as it was seyde a-boue 540  
 And ȝeuyñ hym myn trewe herte as fre  
 As he swoor he ȝaf his herte to me  
 A-non this tigre ful of doubilnesse  
 ffil on hise kneis *with* so deuout humblesse 544  
 With so high reuerence as bi hire cheere  
 So lyk a gentil louere of manere  
 So rauyschid as it semede for the Ioye  
 That neuere Troylis Ne parys of Troye 548  
 Iason certis ne non *oper* man  
 Syn lameth was / þat aldyrferst be-gan  
 To louyn too as wrytyn folk by-forn  
 Ne neuere syn the fyrste man was born 552  
 Ne coude man by twenty thousent part  
 Countyrfete the sophemys of his art  
 Ne were worthi onbokele his galoche  
 There doubilnesse or feynnyge schulde aproche 556  
 Ne so coude thanke a whit as he dede me  
 His manere was an heuene for to se  
 To ony weman were [s]che neuere so wys  
 So peyntede he & kembede at poynt deuys 560  
 As weel hise wordis as hise contenaunce  
 And I louede hym for his obeysaunce  
 And for the trouthe I demede in his herte  
 That ȝif so were that ony thyng hym smerte 564  
 Al were it neuere so lyte & I it wiste  
 Me thouȝte I felte deth myn herte twyste  
 And schortely so fer forth this thyng went  
 That myn wil was his willis instrument 568  
 This is to seye myn wil obeyede his wil  
 In alle thyng as fer as resoun fil  
 Kepyng the boundis of myn worchepe euere  
 Ne neuere hadde I thyng so leef ne leuere 572



As hym god wot ne neuere schal no mo  
 This lastede lengere than a 3eer or twc  
 That I supposede of hire not but good  
 But finally thus at the laste it stood 576  
 That fortune wolde that he muste twynne [leaf 281, back]  
 Out of that place which that he is inne  
 Where me was woo that is no questyoun  
 I can not make of it discripcioun 580  
 ffor on thyng dar I telle baldely  
 I knowe what is the peyne of deth therby  
 Swich harm I felte for he ne myȝte beleue  
 So on a day of me he tok his leue 584  
 So sorwefully ek that I wende verrayly  
 That he hade felt as meche harm as I  
 Whan that I herde hym speke & saw his hewe  
 But natheles I thouthe he was so trewe 588  
 And ek that he repeyre schulde ageyn  
 With-inne a lytil while soth to seyn  
 And resoun wolde ek that he moste go  
 ffor his honour as ofte it happith so 592  
 That I maade vertu of necescitee  
 And tok it weel syn that it muste bee  
 As I best myghte I hidde from hym myn sorwe  
 And tok hym by the hond seynt Ioħn to borw 596  
 And seyde hym thus lo I am ȝourys al<sup>1</sup> [<sup>1</sup> MS alle schalle, with  
 le dotted under]  
 Beth swich as I to ȝow haue been & schal<sup>1</sup>  
 What he answerde it nedyth not reherce  
 Who can seye bet than he / ho can seye werse 600  
 Whan he hath al I-seyd thanne hath he don  
 Therefore byhouyth hire a ful long spon  
 That schulde ete with a feend thus haue I herd seye  
 So at the laste he mote forth his weye 604  
 And forth he flyeth til he cam there hym leste  
 Whan it cam hym to purpos for to reste  
 I trowe he hadde thilke tyxt in mynde  
 That alle thyng repeyrynge to hise kynde 608

Gladyth hym self thus seye men as I gesse  
 Men loue of propyr kynde newefangilnesse  
 As bryddys don that men in cage feede  
 ffor thow thu nyȝt & day of hem take heede 612  
 And strawe hyre <sup>1</sup> cage / as softe as ony silk <sup>[1 a word scratcht out]</sup>  
 And ȝeue hym sugere hony breed & Mylk <sup>[2 leaves out of the Camb. MS]</sup>  
 [ȝit riȝt a none as þat hys dore ys vppe <sup>[Sloane 1685, leaf 85, back]</sup>  
 he with hys feete wille spurne doune hys Cuppe 616  
 And to þe woode he wolle & wormes ete  
 So newefangylle bene þei of hyr mete  
 And louen noueleryes of propre kynde  
 No gentyfnesse of bloode may hem bynde 620  
 So farithe þis Tarselet allas þe day  
 Thouȝe he were gentylle fresshe & gay  
 And goodly for to sene and humble & fre  
 he sawe upon a tyme a kyte fle 624  
 And sodeynly he louythe þis kyte so  
 þat alle his loue ys clene fro me goo  
 And hathe his trouthe falsehede in þis wyse  
 Thus hathe þe kyte my loue in hys seruyce 628  
 And I am lorne with oute remedy  
 And with þat worde þis faucon gan to crye  
 And swoned efte in Canaces barme <sup>[leaf 86]</sup>  
 Grete was þat sorowe of þat haukes harme 632  
 þat Canacee and alle hir women made  
 þei nyste howe þei myȝt þe faucon glade  
 But Canace home berithe hir in hir lappe  
 And softely in plastres gan hir wrappe 636  
 There as she with hir beeke hathe hurte hir silfe  
 Nowe can not Canace but erbys delue  
 Of herbes precious and fyne of hewe  
 Oute of þe grounde and maken salues newe 640  
 To helyn with þe hauke fro day to nyȝt  
 Scho dothe hir besynesse & alle hir myȝt  
 And by hir beddys hede sho made and muwe  
 And couerid hit with velowetys blewe 644

In sene of trouthe þat ys in woman sene [Sloane 1685]  
 And alle *with* oute þe muwe ys · peyntyd grene  
 In whiche were paynted alle þese false foules  
 And bethe þe Tydifs terselettys & owlys . 648  
 Riȝt for dispyte were peyntid hem by syde  
 Pyes on hem for to crye and chyde  
 þus lete I Canace hir hauke kepyng  
 I wolle no more as nowe speke of hir ryng 652  
 Tylle hit come efte to purpos for to sayn  
 how þat þis faucon gate hir loue a ȝeyn  
 Repentaunt as þe story tellithe vs  
 By mediacion of Cambassus 656  
 The kynges sone of whiche y you tolde  
 But hennes I wolle processe holde  
 To speken of adventures and of batayles  
 þat ȝit was neuere herde so grete mervayles 660  
 ffirst wolle I telle you of kambynskan  
 þat in hys tyme many a Citee wan  
 And aftyr wolle I speke of Algarsyf  
 how þat he wan Theodora to his wyf 664  
 ffor whanne fulle ofte in grete perelle he was  
 Ne hade he ben holpen by þe hors of bras  
 And aftyr wolle I speke *with* Camballo [leaf 86, back]  
 þat fauȝt in lystes *with* þe bretheren two · 668  
 ffor Canace or þat he myȝt hir wynne  
 And þere I lefte I wolle a-gayne by-gynne  
 Appollo whirlythe vp hys chare so hyȝe  
 Tylle þat þe god Marcurius hows þe skye 672

Here endith þe tale of þe sqyere] [Sloane 1685 *extract stops*]

[Sloane MS 1685, on leaf 86, back.]

[Here begynnyth þe prologge of þe Marchaunt]

**I**N faythe sqyere þou haste þe wele quyt  
 And gentely I preyse wele þi wytte  
 Quod þe Marchaunte considerynge þis ȝouth  
 So felyngely thouȝthe spekist sir I the allouthe 676  
 As to my dome þere ys none þat ys here  
 Of eloquence þat shalle be þi pere  
 [And if þou lif god [3]if þe goode chaunce [Hatton MS 1]  
 And in vertu send þe perseueraunce] 680  
 ffor of þi speche I haue grete deynte  
 I haue a . sone *and* by þe trinite  
 I hade leuere þan twenty pounce worth of londe  
 þouȝe hit riȝt now were fallen in myne honde 684  
 ye are a man of suche discrecion  
 As þat ye ben fy vpon possession  
 But yf a man by vertuous *with* alle  
 I haue my sone snybbyd *and* ȝit I shalle 688  
 ffor he to vertu listith not entende  
 But for to pley at dyes *and* to dispende  
 And lese alle þat he hathe ys hys vsage  
 And he hade leuere talke *with* a page 692  
 þan to commune *with* eny gentille wiȝt  
 Where he myȝt lerne gentilnesse ariȝt  
 Strawe for youre gentilnesse quod our' Oste  
 What Marchaunt Sir parde wele þou woste 696  
 þat eche of you mot tellen atte leste  
 A tale or twoo or breken hys by-hest  
 þat knowe I wele quod þe Marchaunt certayne  
 I prey you not hauethe me in disdeyne 700

Thouȝe to þis man yf I speke a worde or two [Sloane 1685]

Telle on þi tale *with* out wordes moo

Gladly Sir Oste *quod* he I wolle obey [leaf 87]

Vnto youre wille nowe herkeneth what I seye 704

I wolle not contrarye you in no wyse

As fer as my wyttes wol suffice

I prey to god þat hit mot plesen you

þan wote I wele þat hit ys gode ynowe 708

**Here endithe þe prologge of þe Marchaunt]**



[*Sloane MS 1685, on leaf 145, back.*]

[and bygynnethe þe tale

[*THE PROEM.*]

**T**hys olde genteH Brytouns in hir/ dayes  
 Of dyuerse auentures maden layes  
 Remedyn in hert / first Britoun tonge 711  
 Whiche layes *with* her/ Instrumentes þei songe  
 Opere elles radden hem for her plesaunce  
 And oñ of heme haue I in remembraunce  
 Whiche shalle seye *with* as goode wille as I can  
 But Sires be cause þat I am a bureH man 716  
 At my begynnyng firste I you be-seche  
 hauethe me excused of my rude speche  
 I lerned neuere rethorike certayne  
 þenge þat I speke hit mote be bare & playne 720  
 I slepe neuere on þe Mount of pernasō  
 Ne neuere lered marchus Tullius ne Cithero  
 Colours of rethoryke ne knew I none *with* outen drede  
 But suche Colours as growen in þe mede 724  
 Opere elles suche as men dye or peynte  
 Coloures of rethorike ben me to queynte  
 Myne sperit felipe · nouȝt of suche matere  
 But ȝif you luste my tale shalle ȝe not here] [*Sloane extr. ends*]

[*THE TALE.*]

**I**N Armoryk that callyd is Britayne [*Camb. MS, leaf 287*]  
 There was a knyȝt that louede & dede his payne  
 To serue a lady in his beste wyse  
 And manye a labour / manye a gret empyrse 732  
 CAMBRIDGE 330 (G-T. 500) [part, *Sloane 1685*]

He for his lady wrou3te er sche weere wonne  
 ffor sche was on the fayreste vndyr sunne  
 And ek therto come of so hegh kynrede  
 That weel onethe durste this kny3t for drede 736  
 Telle hire his woo his peyne & his distresse  
 But at the laste / sche for his worthynesse  
 And namely for his meke obeysaunce  
 Hath swich a pete cau3t for his penaunce 740  
 That pruyuyly sche fel of his acord  
 To take hym for hire husbonde & for hire lord  
 Of swich lordschepe as men han of here wyuys  
 And for to leede þe more in blysse hire lyuys 744  
 Of his frewil he swoor hire as a kny3t  
 That he neuere his lyue day ne ny3t  
 Ne schulde vp on hym take maystrye  
 A-geyn hire wil ne kythe hire lalusye 748  
 But hire obeye & folwe hire wil in al  
 As ony louere to his lady schal  
 Saue that the name of souereynte  
 That wele he haue for schame of his degre 752  
 Sche thanked hym with ful greet humblesse  
 And seyde sire seyth of 3oure gentillesse  
 3e profere me to haue so greet a reyne  
 Ne wolde neuere god be-twyn vs tweyne 756  
 As in myn gylt were other werre or stryf  
 Syre I wele be 3oure humble trewe wyf  
 Haue here myn trouthe tyl myn herte breste  
 Thus been they in quyete & in reste 760  
 ffor o thyng syrys sauely dare I seye  
 That frendys eueryche oþer moote obeye  
 3if they wele longe holde cumpannye<sup>1</sup> [<sup>1</sup> P MS ini for nn]  
 Loue wele not been constreynede by maystrye 764  
 Whan maystrye comyth the god of loue anon  
 Bethith his wyngis & farewel he is goon  
 Loue is a thyng as ony spyryt free [leaf 237, back]  
 Wemen of kynde desire libertee 768

And not to been constreyned as a thral  
 And so don men ȝif I soth seyn schal  
 Loke ho so most is pacient in loue  
 He is at his auauntag al a-boue 772  
 Pacience is an high vertu certeyn  
 ffor it venquyschith as these clerkis seyn  
 Thyngis þat rygour schulde neuere atteyne  
 ffor euery word men may not chide or pleyne 776  
 Lernyth to suffere or ellis so mote I goon  
 ȝe schul it lerne wheþer ȝe wele or non  
 ¶ ffor in this world serteyn there no wyȝt is  
 That he ne doth or seyth sumtyme a-mys 780  
 Ire seeknesse or constelacioun  
 Wyn wo or chaungyng of complexioun  
 Causeth oftyn to don amys or spekyn  
 On euery wrong a man may not been wrekyng 784  
 Aftyr the tyme muste be thatemperaunce  
 To euery wyȝt that can on gouernaunce  
 And therefore hath this wyse worthi knyȝt  
 To leue in ese sufferauunce to hire hyȝt 788  
 And sche to hym ful wisely gan to swere  
 That there schulde neuere been defaute in hire  
 ¶ Heere may men se an humble wys a-cord  
 Thus hath sche take hire seruauunt & hire lord 792  
 Seruauunt in loue & lord in maryage  
 Thanne was he bothe in lordschepe & seruage  
 Seruage nay but in lo[r]dschepe a-boue  
 Sythe he hath bothe his lady & his loue 796  
 His lady certis & his wyf also  
 To whiche the lawe of loue a-cordyth þerto  
 And whan he was in this prosperitee  
 Hom with his wyf he goth to his cuntre 800  
 Nough fer fro pedmark þere his dwellynge was  
 Where as he lyuyth in blysse & in solas  
 Who coude telle but he hadde weddede bee  
 The Ioye / the ese / & the prosperite 804

That is be-twyn an husbonde & his wyf [leaf 288]  
 A 3eer & more lastyth this blysfyl lyf  
 Tyl that the kny3t of whom I spak of thus  
 That of kayrrud was clepid Arueragus 808  
 Schoop hym to goon & dwelle a 3eer or tweyne  
 In Ingelond that clepid was er Breteyne  
 To seeke in armys worschepe & honour  
 ffor al his lust he sette in swich labour 812  
 And dwelte there too 3eer the bok seyth thus  
 Now wele I stynte of this <sup>1</sup>Arueragus [<sup>1</sup> A, *first a*]  
 And speke I wele of dorigious his wyf  
 That louyth hire husbonde as hire lyf 816  
 ffor hyse<sup>2</sup> absence wepith sche & sykyth [<sup>2</sup> *first hire*]  
 As doon these noble wyuys whan hem lykyth  
 Sche / mornyth / wakyth / waylyth / fastith pleynyth  
 Desyr of hise presens so hire streynyth 820  
 That al this wyde world sche sette at nou3t  
 Hire frendys whiche that knewe hyre heuy thou3t  
 Confortyn <sup>3</sup>here in al<sup>3</sup> that euer they may [<sup>3</sup>→ *corrected*]  
 They preche hire they telle hire nyght & day 824  
 That causeles sche sleth hyre selue allas  
 And euery confort possible in this cas  
 They don to hire with al here besynesse  
 Al for to make hire leue hire heuynesse 828  
 By proces as 3e<sup>4</sup> knowyn euerichoon [<sup>4</sup> 3e *corrected*]  
 Man may so longe grauyn in a stoon  
 Tyl sum fygure ther-in enpryntid be  
 So longe han they confortid tyl that sche 832  
 Resceyuede hath by hope & by resoun  
 Thenprentyng of <sup>5</sup>hire consolacyoun [<sup>5</sup> h, *first 3*]  
 Thorw whiche / al hire sorwe gan swage  
 Sche may not al wey duryn in swych rage 836  
 And ek <sup>6</sup>Arueragus in al this care [<sup>6</sup> A, *first a*]  
 Hath sent hire lettere hom of his weelfare  
 And that he hastily wele come a-geyn  
 Or ellis hadde this sorwe hire herte slayn 840

Here freendis saw hyre sorwe gan a-slake  
 And preyede hire / on kneis for godis sake  
 To comyn & romyn heere in cumpanye [leaf 288, back]  
 A-wey to dryue hire derke fantasye 844  
 And finally sche grauntede that requeste  
 ffor wel sche thouzte it was for the beste  
 Now stood hire castel faste by the see  
 And oftyn with hire freendis walkede sche 848  
 Hire to disporte on this banke an high  
 Where that sche manye a schip & barge seigh  
 Seylynge here cours / where as hem leste goo  
 But thanne was that a *parcel* of hire woo 852  
 ffor to hire self ful ofte seyde sche  
 Is there no schip / of so manye as I se  
 Wil bryngyn hom myn lord thanne were myn herte  
 Al warychid of hire bittere peynys smerte 856  
 A nothir tyme there wolde sche sitte & thynke  
 And caste hire eyen / doun fro the brynke  
 But whan sche say / the gresely rokis blake  
 ffor verray feer / so wolde hyre herte quake 860  
 That on hire feet / sche myzt hire not sustene  
 Thanne wolde sche sitte / adoun vp on the grene  
 And pitously / in-to the se by-holde  
 And seye ryzt thus / with sorweful sikys colde 864  
 Eterne god / that thour thyn puruyaunce  
 Ledist the world / be Iuste gouernaunce  
 In ydil as men seyn / 3e nothyng make  
 But lord these grysely / feendly rokkis blake 868  
 That semyn rathere / a foul confusioun  
 Of werk than ony fayr creacioun  
 Of which / a parfyt / wys god & stable  
 Why han 3e wrouzt this werk onresonable 872  
 ffor bi this werk. South. North / West & Est  
 There is I-fostered. no man / ne brid ne best  
 It doth no good / to myn wit but a-noyith  
 Se 3e nat lord how mankynde it distroyeth 876



An hunderede thousent / bodyis of mankynde  
 Han rolkis slayn / al ben they nat in mynde  
 Whiche mankynd is / so fayr a part of thyn werk  
 That þou it madist / lyk to thyn owene merk 880  
 Thanne semythit 3e hadde a gret chiertee [leaf 289]  
 Toward<sup>1</sup> mankynde but how thanne may it be [<sup>1</sup> o corrected]  
 That 3e sweche meenys make it to distroyen  
 Whiche menys doon no good but euere a-noyen 884  
 I wot wel clerkys wele seye as hem leste<sup>2</sup> [<sup>2</sup> este corrected]  
 By argumentis that al is for the beste  
 Thow I ne can the causis not I-knowe  
 But that god / that made wynd to blowe 888  
 As keepe myn lord / this is myn conclusioun  
 To clerkis leete I al discripcioun  
 But wolde god that alle these rokkis blake  
 Were sunkyn in-to helle for his sake 892  
 These rokkis sleen myn herte for the fere  
 Thus seyde sche with manye a pitous teere  
 Hire fryndys saw that it was no disport  
 To romyn by the se but discomfort 896  
 And schopyn for to pleyen sum wher ellis  
 They leddyn hire by reueris & by wellis  
 And ek in othere places delectables  
 Th[e]y dauncedyu the[y] pleyedyn at ches & tablys 900  
 So on a day ryȝt in the morwetide  
 Vn-tyl a gardyn that was ther byside  
 In whiche they haddyn mad here ordenaunce  
 Of vitaylis & of othere puryaunce 904  
 They goon & pleye hem al the longe day  
 And this was on the sexte morwe of may  
 Whiche may hadde peyntid wit<sup>h3</sup> hise softe schourys [<sup>3</sup> h later]  
 This gardyn ful of leuys & of flouris 908  
 And craft of manys hand so curiously  
 Arayed hadde this gardyn trewely  
 That neuere was there<sup>4</sup> gardy of swich a prys [<sup>4</sup> Arat that]  
 But it hadde been the verray paradys 912

The odour of flourys & the frosche syght  
 Wolde han maad ony herte for to lyzt  
 That euere was born but ȝif to gret seknesse  
 Or to greet sorwe hadde it in distresse 916  
 So ful it was of beute with plesaunce  
 At aftyr dyner gunne thei<sup>1</sup> to daunce [1 i later]  
 And synge also saue dorygeen<sup>2</sup> alone [2 dorygeen cor.] [1f 289, bk 1]  
 Whiche maade alwey hire compleynt & hyre mone 920  
 ffor sche ne saw hym on the daunce go  
 That was hire husbonde & hire loue also  
 But natheles sche mote a tyme ( a-byde  
 And wyth good hope lete hire here<sup>3</sup> slyde [3 ere corrected] 924  
 Vp on this daunce a-mongis opere men  
 Daunsede a squier bi-fore Dorigen<sup>4</sup> [4 o corrected]  
 That froschere was & Iolyere of aray  
 As to myn doon as is the monyth of may 928  
 He syngith daunseth passynge ony man  
 That is or was syn the world be-gan  
 Ther-with he was ȝif men schulde hym disceryue  
 On of te beste farynge man on lyue 932  
 ȝong. strong. ryght verteuous. & ryche. & wys  
 And weel be-louyd & holdyn in greet prys  
 And schortely ȝif the sothe tellyn schal  
 Onwetyng of this Dorygen at al 936  
 This lusty squyer seruauz to venus  
 Whiche pat I-clepede was aurelius  
 Hadde louyd hire best of ony creature  
 Too ȝeer & more as was his auenture 940  
 But neuere durste he telle hire his greuance  
 Wyth-oute cuppe he drank al his penaunce  
 He was dispeyred nothyng durste he seye  
 Saue in his songis sumwhat wolde he wreye 944  
 His woo as in a gentyl compleynyng  
 He seyde he louede & was belouyd nothyng  
 Of swiche matiere made he manye layis  
 Songis compleyntis / roundelis vielayes 948

How he durste not his sorwe telle  
 But languscht as a furye doth in helle  
 And deye he muste he seyde as dede Ekko  
 ffor Narcisus<sup>1</sup> that durste not telle his wo [<sup>1</sup> *aus corrected*] 952  
 In othere maner than 3e here me seye  
 Ne durste he nat to hire his woo be-wreye  
 Saue that parauenture sumtyme at daunces  
 There 3onge folk kepyn here obseruaunces 956  
 It may wel be he lokede on hire face [leaf 290]  
 In swich a wyse as men that askyth grace  
 But no thyng wiste sche of his entente  
 Nathe-les it happid er they thens wente 960  
 By cause that he was hire neghebour  
 And was a man of worchepe & honour  
 And hadde I-knowyn hym of tyme 3ore  
 They fille in speche & they more & more 964  
 Vn-to his purpos drow aurelius  
 And whan he saw his tyme he seyde thus  
 Madame quod he by god that this world maade  
 So that I wyste it myzte 3oure herte glade 968  
 I wolde þat day that 3oure arueragus  
 Wente ouyr the se that I Aurelyus  
 Hadde went there neuere I schulde a comyn a-geyn  
 ffor weel I woot myn seruyse is in veyn 972  
 My guerdoun is but brestynge of myn herte  
 Madame rewyth on mynne peynys smerte  
 ffor with a word 3e may ne sle & saue  
 Heere at 3oure feet god wolde that I were graue 976  
 I ne haue as now no leyser more<sup>2</sup> to seye [<sup>2</sup> *more corrected*]  
 Hauyth mercy swete or ellis 3e do me deye  
 ¶ Sche gan to lokyn vp on aurelius  
 Is this 3oure wil quod sche & seye 3e thus 980  
 Neuere erst quod sche ne wiste I<sup>3</sup> what 3e mente [<sup>3</sup> *I corrected*]  
 But now<sup>4</sup> Aurelius I knewe 3oure entente [<sup>4</sup> *w corrected*]  
 By-twixe god that 3af me soule & lyf  
 Ne schal I neuere been vntrewe wyf 984

In word ne werk as fer as I haue wit  
 I wele been his to whom that I am knyht  
 Take this for fynal answeere as of me  
 But after in pleyne thus seyde sche 988  
 Aurele quod sche bi hye god a-boue  
 3it wolde I grauntyn 3ow to been 3oure loue  
 Syn I se 3ow so pitously compleyne  
 Loke what day that endelyng Breteyne 992  
 3e remoue alle the rolkis ston be ston  
 That they ne lette schyp<sup>1</sup> ne boot to goon [1 *first schpp*]  
 I seye whan 3e han mad the cost so clene [leaf 290, back]  
 Of rokkis that there ne is no stoon I-seene 996  
 Thanne wele I loue 3ow best of ony man  
 Haue here myn trouthe In al that euere I can  
 Is there noon othis grace quod he  
 No be that lord quod sche that makede me 1000  
 ffor wel I wot that I<sup>t</sup> schal neuere betyde  
 Lat sweche folys out of 3oure herte slyde  
 What deynte schulde a man han in his lyf  
 ffor to go loue a-no<sup>per</sup> manys wyf 1004  
 That hath hire body whan so that hym lykyth  
 Aurelius ful ofte sore sykyth  
 Wo was aurelius whan that he this herde  
 And with a sorweful herte he thus answerde 1008  
 Madame quod he this were an Impossible  
 Thanne mote I deye on sodeyn deth horrible  
 And with that word he turnede hym a-non  
 Tho come here othere frendis manyon 1012  
 And in the aleyijs they romede vp & doun  
 And no thyng wiste of this conclusioun  
 But sodeynly begunne reuel newe  
 Til that the bryzte sunne loste his hewe 1016  
 ffor thorisonte refte þe sunne his lyzt  
 This is as meche to seye as it was nyzt  
 And hom they goon In Ioye & in solas  
 Saue only wreche Aurelius allas 1020



He to his hous is goon with sorweful herte  
 He seth he may not from his deth asterte  
 Hym somede that he felte his herte colde  
 Vp to the heuene hise hondis he gan holde 1024  
 And on hise kneis bare he sette hym down  
 And in his rauynge seyde his orysoun  
 ffor verray woo out of his wit he broyde  
 He nyste what he spak but thus he seyde 1028  
 With pitous herte his pleynt hath he bygunne  
 Vnto the goddis & fyrst vp to the sunne  
 ¶ He seyde Appollo god & gouernour  
 Of euery plaunte herbe tre & flour 1032  
 That ȝeuyst after thi declinacioun [leaf 291]  
 To eche of hem his tyme & his sesoun  
 As thyn herberwe chaungith lowe & hyghe  
 Lord phebus cast thyn merciable Iye 1036  
 On wrechede auryele wheche that am but lorn  
 Lo lord myn lady hath myn deth I-sworn  
 With-outyn gilt but thyn benyngnete  
 Vp-on myn dedly herte haue sum petee 1040  
 ffor wel I wot lord phebus If thou lest  
 ȝe may me helpe saue myn lady best  
 Now vouchith saf that I may ȝow deuyse  
 How that I may been holpe & in what wyse 1044  
 ¶ ȝoure blysfyl systyr luciane the schene  
 That of the see is cheef goddesse & queene  
 Thow neptinius haue deyte on the see  
 ȝit Enaparensse a-bouyn hym is sche 1048  
 ȝe knowyn weel lord that ryȝt as hire desyr  
 is to been quykyd & lyghtenyd of ȝoure fyer  
 ffor whiche sche folwyth ȝow ful busyly  
 Ryȝt so the see desyryth naturelly 1052  
 To folwyn hire as sche that is goddesse  
 Bothe in the se & ryuerys more & lesse  
 Therefore lord phebus this is myn request  
 Do this myrakele or do myn herte brest 1056



That now next at this opposicioun  
 Which in the sygne schal be of the lyoun  
 As preyeth hire so greet a flood to brynge  
 That fyue fademe at the leste it ouyr sprynge 1060  
 The hyste rok in armorik briteyne  
 And lat this flod endure 3erys tweyne  
 Thanne sertys to myn lady may I seye  
 Holdyth 3oure heste the rokkis been a-wey 1064  
 Lord phebus doth this myrakele for me  
 Preyeth hyr sche go no fastere cours than 3e  
 I seye preye 3oure systyr that sche goo  
 Non fastere course / these 3erys two 1068  
 Thanne schal sche been at the fulle alwey  
 And spryng flood laste bothe nyght & day  
 And but she wouchesaf in swich maneere [leaf 291, back]  
 To graunte me myn souereyn lady deere 1072  
 Preye hire to synke euery rokke a-doovn  
 In to hire owene derke rigioun  
 Vndyr the ground there <sup>1</sup>pluto dwellyth Inne [<sup>1</sup> plu corrected]  
 Or neuere more schal I myn lady wyne 1076  
 Thy temple in delphos wil I barfoot seke  
 Lord phebus se the teris on myn cheke  
 And of myn peyne haue compassioun  
 And with word for sorwe he fel a-doun 1080  
<sup>2</sup>And long tyme he lay / forth in a traunce<sup>2</sup> [<sup>2-3</sup> on an erasure]  
 His brothir which that knew of his penaunce  
 Vp cau3te hym / & to bedde hath hym brou3t  
 Dispeyrede in this turnement & this thoght 1084  
 Lete I this woful creature lye  
 Chese he for me / where he wele leue or dye  
 ¶ Arueragus / with heye<sup>3</sup> & gret honour [<sup>3</sup> y corrected]  
 As he that was of chyualrye the flour 1088  
 Is comyn hom & othere worthy men  
 O blysfyl art tow now thow Dorigeoun  
 That hast thyn lusty husbonde in thyne armys  
 The frosche kny3t the worthi man of armys 1092

That louyt the as his owene hertis lyf  
 Noth'ng luste hym to be ymaginatyf  
 3if ony wight hadde spoke whil he was oute  
 To hire of loue he hadde of it no doute 1096  
 He not entendyth to no swich matere  
 But daunceith Iustyth makyth hire good chere  
 And thus in Ioye & blysse I leete hem dwelle  
 And of the sike Aurelyus I wele 3ow telle 1100  
 ¶ In langure & in turnemen furyus  
 Two 3eer & moore lay wreche aurelyus  
 Er ony foote he my3te on erthe goon  
 Ne confort in this tyme ne hadde he noon 1104  
 Saue of his brothir which that was a clerk  
 He knew of al this wo & al this werk  
 ffor to noon othir creature certeyn  
 Of this matere he durste no word seyn 1108  
 Vndyr his brest he bar it sore [leaf 292]  
 And so fer forth it greuede hym <sup>the</sup> moore [spurious]  
 Than euere dede Pamplius or Galatheene  
 His brest was sor *with-outyn* for to sene  
 But in his herte ay was the arwe kene 1112  
 And weel 3e knowe that of a sursanure  
 In surgerye is *parlions* the cure  
 But men my3te tuche the arwe or come therby  
 His brothir wep & waylede pryuyly 1116  
 Til at the laste hym fil in remembraunce  
 That whil he was at orlionys in fraunce  
 As 3onge clerkis that been likerous  
 To rendyn artis that been curious 1120  
 Sekin in eueri halk & euery herne  
 Particuler sciencis for to lerne  
 He hym remembrede that vp-on a day  
 At orlionys in stodie he say 1124  
 Of magyk naturel whiche that his felawe  
 That was that tyme a bacheler of lawe *nota bacularium*  
 Al were he there to lerne a nothir craft  
 Hadde priuyly vp on his deske left 1128

Touhyng the eyghte & twenty manciounys	1130
That longyn to the moone & swich folye	1131
Swich book that spak meche of the operaciounys	1129
[As in oure dayes nys not worþe a flye]	[Sloane 1685]
ffor holycherchis feyth in oure beleue	1133
Ne suffere noone illusiounys vs to greue	
And whan this bok was in remembraunce	
Anoon for ioye his herte gan to daunce	1136
And to hym self he seyde pryuyly	
Myn brother schal been warshit <sup>1</sup> hastily	[ <sup>1</sup> rshit corrected]
ffor I am sekyr that theere ben sciencis	
By whiche men mak diuers apparencis	1140
Sweche as these subtile tregettourys pleye	
ffor ofte at festis / haue I weel herd seye	
That tregettouris with-inne an halle large	
Haue mad come in a watyr & a barge	1144
And in the halle rowyn vp & doun	
Sumtyme haue semyd to come a grym lyoun	
And sumtyme flouris sprynge as in a mede	[leaf 292, back]
Sumtyme a vine & grapis white & reede	1148
Sumtyme a castel al of lym & stoon	
And whan hym lykith woydede it anoon	
Thus semede it to euery manys syzt	
Now thanne conclude I thus as ȝif I myght	1152
At orlyonys sum old felawe I fynde	
That hadde these monys manciounys in mynde	
Or othere Magyk naturel a-boue	
He schulde weel make myn brothir han his love	1156
ffor with apparens a clerk may make	
To mannys syzt that alle the rokkis blake	
Of Brytaygne were voydede euerychon	
And schippis by the brynke comyn & goon	1160
And in swich forme endure a day or two	
Thanne were myn brothir warsched of his woo	
Thanne muste sche nedys holdyn hyre by-hest	
Or ellis he schal schame hire at the leste	1164

What schulde I make a lengere tale of this  
 Vnto hise brotheris bed he comyn is  
 And swich confort he ȝaf hym for to goon  
 To Orlyonys that he vp styrtē a-noon 1168  
 And in his weye forward is he fare  
 In hope for to been lessede of his care  
 Whan they were come / almost to that cete  
 But ȝif it were a two furlong or thre 1172  
 A ȝong clerk romynge by hym self he mette  
 Whiche that in latyn thurstily hym grette  
 And aftyr that he seyde a wondyr thyng  
 I knowe quod he the cause of ȝoure comyng 1176  
 And er they ferthere ony foote wente  
 He told hem al that was in here entente  
 This Britoun Clerk hym askede of felawys  
 The whiche hem had knowe of olde dawis 1180  
 And he answerde hem that they dede were  
 ffor which he wepte ful ofte manye a teere  
 Doun of his hors Aurelyus lyȝte a-non  
 And with this Magicien forth is he gon 1184  
 Hom to his hous & maade hem wel at eese [leaf 293]  
 Hem lakkede no vitayle that myghte hem please  
 So weel arayede hous as there was oon  
 Aurelyus in his lyf saw neuere noon 1188  
 He shewede hym er he wente to soper  
 fforestis / parkis ful of wylde deer  
 There saugh he hertis with here hornys hye  
 The grettēste that euere were seyn<sup>1</sup> with Iye [1 first seyn]  
 He saw of hem an hunderede weere slayn with houndis  
 And some with arwis bledde of bittere wondys  
 He say whan woyded were the wylde deer  
 The faucounneris vp-on a fayr reuer 1196  
 That with here haukys han the heyroun slayn  
 Tho saugh he knyȝtis slayn in a playn<sup>2</sup> [2 a altered]  
 And aftyr this he dede hym swich plesaunce  
 That he hym schewede his lady on a dau[n]ce 1200

On whiche hym selue daunsede as hym thouȝte  
 And whanne this Maystyr that this Magik wrouȝt  
 Saw it was tyme he clapte hise handis two  
 And farweel al oure reuel was a go 1204  
 And remoūuede they neuere out of the hous  
 Whil they seye al the syght meruelious  
 But in hise stodie there as hise bokys be  
 They seetyn stille & no whit but they thre 1208  
 To hym his maystir callede his squyer  
 And seyde thus is-redy oure <sup>1</sup>soper [1 so altered]  
 Almost an hour it is I vndyrtake  
 Sythe I ȝow bad oure soper for to make 1212  
 Whān that these worthi men wentyn *with me*  
 In-to myne stodye there as mynne bokis be  
 Syre quod this squyer whan that it lykyth ȝow  
 It is al redy thow ȝe wele rygh now 1216  
 Go we thanne suppe as for the beste  
 These amerouse folk sumtyme mote han reste  
 At aftyr soper felle they in tretee  
 What summe schulde this maysteris gerdoun bee 1220  
 To remeuyne alle the rokkis of bretayne  
 And ek from Gerounde to the mount of Sayne [2 first strong]  
 He made it straung<sup>2</sup> & swor so god hym saue [leaf 293, back]  
 Lasse than a thousent pound wolde he nat haue 1224  
 Ne gladli<sup>3</sup> for that summe wolde he nat goon [3 i later]  
 Aurelyus *with* blysfyl herte a-noon  
 Answerde thus fy on a thousent pound  
 This wide world which that men seyn is round 1228  
 I wolde it ȝeue ȝif I weere lord of it  
 This bargayn is ful drewyn for we been knyȝt  
 ȝe schal been payed trewely be myn trouthe  
 But lokyth now for no necligence ne slouthe 1232  
 ȝe tarye vs no lengere than to morwe  
 Nay quod this clerk / here myn feyth to borwe  
 To bedde is goon Aurelius whan hym leste  
 And wel nygh al that nyght he hadde his reste 1236



What for his labour & his hope of blys  
 His woful herte of penaunce hadde a lys  
 Vp on the morwe whan that it was day  
 To bryteyne toke they the ryȝte way 1240  
 Aurelyus & the Magicyoun by syde  
 And been descendit there they wele vnbyde  
 And this was as the bokys me remembre  
 The colde frosty sesoun of decembre<sup>1</sup> [1 c corrected] 1244  
 Phebus wex old & hewid lyk latoun  
 That in his hoote declynacioun  
 Schon as the burnet gold with streemys bryȝte  
 But now in Caprycorn adoun he lyghte 1248  
 Where as he schon ful pale I dar weel seyn  
 The bittere frostis with the sleet & reyn  
 Distroyed hat the grene & euery ȝerd<sup>2</sup> [2 r altered]  
 Ianus sit by the fyr with double berd 1252  
 And drynkyth of hyse bugle horn the wyn  
 By-forn hym stant braun / of the tuskyd swyn  
 An Nowel syngyth / eueuery lusty man  
 Aurelius in al that euere he can 1256  
 Doth to his maystyr chier & reuerence  
 And preyeth hym to don his dilygence  
 To bryngyn hym out of hise peynys smerte  
 Or with a swerd that he wolde slytte his herte 1260  
 This subtyl clerk swych routhe hadde of this man [leaf 294]  
 That nygh[t] & day he spedde hym as he kan  
 To waytyn a tyme of his conclusioun  
 That is to seyne to makyn illusioun 1264  
 By swich an apparens or iogilrye  
 I ne can no termys of astrologie  
 That sche & euery wygh[t] schulde wene & seye  
 That of Brytayne the rokkys were a-weye 1268  
 Or ellys they were sunkyn vndyr grounde  
 So at the laste he hath his tyme I-founde  
 To make hise Iapis & hise wrechedenesse  
 Of swich a supersticious cursedenesse 1272

Hise tablis colletanes / forth he brouȝte  
 ful weel correctid / ne there lakkede nough[t]  
 Neythir his collect / ne his expans ȝeeris  
 Ne hise rotis ne hise othere geris 1276  
 As been hise sentris & hise argumentis  
 And hise proporciounys conuenientis  
 ffor hise equatiou[n]s / in euery thyng  
 And by his .8°. speere / in his werkyng 1280  
 He knew ful weel / hu fer Alnath was schoue  
 ffro the hed of thilke<sup>1</sup> / fixe aries a-boue [1 *first* thikke]  
 That in the nynte speere considered is  
 ful subtilly he calkelid al this 1284  
 Whan he hadde founde his fyrste mancioun  
 He knew the remenaunt / by proporcioun  
 And knew tharysyng of the moone weel  
 And in whos face & terme euerideel 1288  
 And knew ful weel the monys mancioun  
 A-cordaunt to his operacioun  
 And knew also hise othere obseruauncis  
 ffor sweche illusiounys & sweche myschauncis 1292  
 As hethene folk vsedyn / in thilke dayis  
 ffor which no lengere makyth he delayis  
 But thour his magik for a wyke or tweye  
 It semede þat alle the rokkys were aweye 1296  
 ¶ Aurelyus which that ȝit dispeyred is  
 Where he schal han his loue / or fare a mys  
 Awaytht nygh[t] & day on this myrakele [leaf 294, back]  
 And whan he knew þat there was noon obstakele 1300  
 That woydede weere the rokkys euerychon  
 Doun to hise maysteris feet he fel a-noon  
 And seyde I woful wreche aurelyus  
 Thanke I<sup>2</sup> ȝow lord & lady myn Venus [<sup>2</sup> I ȝo corrected] 1304  
 That me han holpyn of myne caris colde  
 And to the temple his weye forth hath helde  
 Where as he knew he schulde his lady see  
 And whan he saw his tyme a-noon ryght he 1308

With dredful herte & with humble cheere  
 Saluyth hath his souereyn lady deere  
 ¶ Myn ryghte lady quod this woful man  
 Whom I most dreede & loue as I best can 1312  
 And lothest weere of al this world displeese  
 Neere it þat I for 3ow / haue swich disese  
 That I muste deyen here at 3oure fot a-non  
 Nat wolde I telle how me is wo bygoon 1316  
 But sertys othir muste I deye or pleyne  
 3e sle me giltles for veray peyne  
 But of myn deth thow 3e han no routh  
 A-vyseth 3ow er than 3e breke 3oure trouthe 1320  
 repente 3ow for thilke god a-boue  
 Er 3e me sle by cause that I 3ow loue  
 ffor madame weel 3e wot what 3e han hy3t  
 Nat that I chalange ony thyng of ryght 1324  
 Of 3ow myn souereyn lady but 3oure grace  
 But in a gardyn / 3ond in swich a place  
 3e woot ry3t weel what 3e be-hyghtyn me  
 And in myn hand 3oure trouthe plyghte 3e 1328  
 To loue me god wot 3e seyde so  
 Al be that I vnworthi am therto  
 Madame I speke it for the honour of 3ow  
 Moore than to saue myn hertys lyf ry3t now 1332  
 I haue don so as 3e comaundede me  
 And 3if 3e vouche saf 3e may go se  
 Doth as 3ow lyste hauyth 3oure heste in mynde  
 ffor quyk or ded rygh[t] there 3e schul me fynde 1336  
 In 3ow lyth al to do me lyue or deye [leaf 295]  
 But weel I wot the rolkis been a-weye  
 He takyth his leue & sche a-stonyd stod  
 In al hire face nas a drope of blood 1340  
 Sche wenede neuere / haue come in swich a trappe  
 Allas quod sche that euere this schulde happe  
 ffor wende I neuere by possibilite  
 That swich a monstre or merueyle myghte be 1344

It is ageyn the prosses of nature  
 And hom sche goth a sorweful *criature*  
 ffor verray fer onethe/ may sche go  
 Sche wepith waylyth al a day or two 1348  
 And swounnyth that routhe it was to see  
 But whi it was to no wyȝt tolde schee  
 ffor out of tounne was goon arueragus  
 But to hire self sche spak & seyde thus 1352  
 With pale face & with ful sorweful cheere  
 In hire compleynt as ȝe schal aftyr heere  
 ¶ Allas quod sche on the fortune I pleyne  
 That vndyr wrapped / hast me in thyn cheyne 1356  
 ffor which to skape<sup>1</sup> woot I no socour [1 kap corrected]  
 Saue only deth / or ellys dishonour  
 Oon of these two / by-howith me to cheese  
 But na-theles ȝit haue I leuere to lese 1360  
 Myn lyf than of myn body to han a schame  
 Or knowyn myn self<sup>2</sup> fals or lese myn name [2 el corrected]  
 And with myn deth I may been quit I-wis  
 Hat there nat manye a noble wyf er this 1364  
 And manye a maydyn I-slayn hire self allas  
 rathere than with hire body don trespas  
 ȝis certis lo these storyis bere witnesse  
 Whan thretty tirauntis ful of cursedenesse 1368  
 Hadde slayn Phidoun in atthenes<sup>3</sup> at the feste [3 h altered]  
 They comaundit his doughtren for tareste  
 And bryngyn here<sup>4</sup> by-forn hym in despit [4 first he]  
 Al nakid to fulfyllen his foule delyt 1372  
 And in here fadyris blood they made hem daunce  
 Vp on the pauement god ȝeue hym myschance  
 ffor which these woful maydenys ful of drede [leaf 294, back]  
 Rathere than thy wolde lese here maydynheede 1376  
 They<sup>5</sup> pr'uyly ben styrt in-to a welle [5 ey corrected]  
 And drenkte hem seluyn as the bokys telle  
 ¶ They of Messene lete enquire & seke  
 Of Latedomye fifty madenys eke 1380



On whiche they wolde doon here lecherye  
 But was there noon of al that cumpaynye  
 That sche nas slayn & with a good<sup>1</sup> entente [1 *first god*]  
 Ches rathere for to deye / than assente 1384  
 To been oppressed of hire maydynhede  
 Whi schulde I thanne to deye been en drede  
 ¶ Loke ek the <sup>2</sup>tyraunt aristoclides [2 *ty corrected*]  
 That louede a mayden / hyghte stymphabides 1388  
 Whan that hire fadyr slay was on a nyght  
 On to dyane temple goth sche ryȝt  
 And hente the emage in hire armys two  
 ffrom which I-mage wolde sche nat go 1392  
 No whygh[t] myghte hire handys of it a-race  
 Tyl sche was slayn ryȝt in the selue place  
 ¶ Now sythe that maydenys / <sup>3</sup>haddyn swich dispit [3 *ad cor.*]  
 To been defoyled with manys foule delyt 1396  
 Weel oghte a wyf<sup>4</sup> rathere hyre selue slee [4 *f corrected*]  
 Than been defoyled as it semyth mee  
 What schal I seye of hasdrubales wyf  
 That at cartage be-rafte hire self hire lyf 1400  
 Whan<sup>5</sup> sche say that romaynys wan the tounn [5 *'that' scratched out*]  
 Sche tok hire chyldere alle & skypte a-doun  
 In-to the fer & ches rathere to deye  
 Than ony romayn dede hire vilanye<sup>6</sup> [6 *n altered*] 1404  
 ¶ Hath not lucesse I-slayn hire self allas  
 At rome whan sche oppressed<sup>7</sup> was [7 *o. pres corrected*]  
 Of Tarquyn for hire thoughte it was a schame  
 To lyuyn whan sche hadde lost hire name 1408  
 ¶ The seuene maydenys of Melesye also  
 Han slayn hem self for verray drede & wo  
 rathere than folk of gaule hem schulde opperresse  
 Mo than a thousent storyis as I gesse 1412  
 Coude I now telle as touchynge this mateere [leaf 236]  
 ¶ Whan Hadrabate was slayn his wyf so deere  
 Hire selvyn slow / & leet hire blood to glyde  
 In Hadrabis woundis deepe & wyde 1416



And seyde myn body at the leste way  
 There schal no man defoylyn 3if I may  
 What schulde I mo ensaumplys hereof sayn  
 Syn that so manye / han hem selue slayn 1420  
 Wel rathere than they wolde defoyled be  
 I wele conclude that it is bet to me  
 To slen myn self than ben defoyled thus  
 I wele been trewe vn-to <sup>1</sup>Arueragus [<sup>1</sup> A corrected] 1424  
 Or rathere slen myn self <sup>2</sup> in sum manere [<sup>2</sup> el corrected]  
 ¶ As dede democienys doughtyr deere  
 Bi-cause sche wolde not defoylyd be  
 ¶ O Cedasus it is ful greet pite 1428  
 To redyn how thynne doughteryn deyedyn allas  
 That slow hem self for swych manere cas  
 ¶ As greet a pyte was it or wel moore  
 The theban maydyn that for nychanore 1432  
 Hire seluyn slow / ryzt for swych maner wo  
 ¶ A nothir theban maydyn dede ryzt so  
 ffor on of massedoyne hadde hire oppressed  
 Sche with hyre deth hyre maydynhed redressed 1436  
 ¶ What schal I seyn of nycherates wyf  
 That for swich cas berafte hire self hyre lyf  
 ¶ How trowe 3e ek was Althebiades  
 Hyre loue al rathere for to deyen chees 1440  
 Than for to sufferyn hyse <sup>3</sup> body onburyede be [<sup>3</sup> first hyre]  
 ¶ Loo which a wyf was Alceste quod sche  
 ¶ What seyth Omer of goode penolopee  
 As Crece knowyth of hire chastitee 1444  
 ¶ Parde of Lacedomya is wrytyn thus  
 That whan at troye was slayn Prothesclaus  
 No lengere wolde sche leuyn aftyr hise <sup>4</sup> day [<sup>4</sup> first hife]  
 ¶ The same of noble poreya tellyn I may 1448  
 With-outyn Brutus coude sche nat lyue  
 To whom sche hadde al hol hire herte 3yue  
 ¶ The parfyte wifhod of Arthemesye [leaf 296, back]  
 Honoured is thour al the Barbarye 1452

¶ O Teuta queen / thyn wyfly chastitee  
To alle wyuys may a myroure bee

[ . . . . . *[Not in any Brit. Mus.,  
Cambr., or Bodleian MS,  
or Christ-Church.]*  
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]

Thus pleynede Dorigen a day or tweye 1457

Purposynge euere that sche wolde deye

But natheles vp-on the thredde nyȝt

Hom cam Arueragus this worthy knyȝt 1460

And axed hire why that sche weep so sore

And sche gan wepyn euere lengere the more

¶ Allas quod sche that euere was I born

Thus haue I seyde quod sche thus haue I sworn 1464

And tolde hym al as ȝe han herd be-fore

It nedith nat reherse ȝow no moore

This husbonde *with* glad cheere in frendely wyse

Answerede & seyde as I schal ȝow denyse 1468

Is there ought ellis / Dorigene but this

Nay nay quod sche god helpe me so as wis

This is to meche & it were godys wille

ȝa wyf quod he / lat slepyn & be styлле 1472

[hit may be wele ȝit *peraventure* to say *[Sloane 1685, l<sup>r</sup> 155, bk]*

ȝe sholen yuore trouthe holden by youre fay]

ffor god so wysely haue mercy vp-on me

I hadde wel leuere I-stekyd for to be 1476

ffor verray loue whiche that I to ȝow haue

But ȝif ȝe schulde ȝoure trouthe kepe & <sup>1</sup>saue *[1<sup>st</sup> lost haue]*

Trouthe is the heyeste thyng that man may kepe

And with that word he brast a-non to weepe 1480

And seyde I ȝow forbode vp peyne of deth

That neuere whil ȝow lastyt lyf or breth

To wyght telle thow of this auenture

As I best may I wele myn wo endure 1484

Ne make no cuntenaunce of heuynesse

That folk of ȝow may deme harm or gesse

And forth he clepith a squyer & a mayde

Goth forth a-non *with* Dorigene he sayde 1488



for which in fewe wordys seyde he thus  
 Madame sythe to 3oure lord Arueragus  
 That sithe I se his grete gentillesse  
 To 3ow & eek I se wel 3oure distresse 1528  
 That he were leuere han schame & that were routhē  
 Than 3e to me schulde breke thus 3oure trouthe  
 I haue wel leuere euere to suffere wo  
 Than I departe the loue by-twixe 3ow two 1532  
 I 3ow relese madame in-to 3oure hond  
 Quyt euery surement & euery bond  
 That 3e han mad to me as here be-forn  
 Sith thylke tyme which that 3e were born 1536  
 Myn trouthe I <sup>1</sup>plyghte I schal 3ow neuere re-preue [*lf 297, bk*]  
 Of no behestē & here I take myn leue [*1 ly first hi*]  
 As of <sup>the</sup> treweste & the beste wyf  
 That euere 3it I knew in al myn lyf 1540  
 But euery wif be war of hire byhēste  
 On Dorigene / remembr[*i*]th at the leste  
 Thus can a squyer doon a gentyl deede  
 As weel as kan a knyȝt / *with*-outyn drede 1544  
 ¶ Sche thanked hym vp-on hire kneis al bare  
 And hom vn-to hire husbonde is sche fare  
 And told hym al a<sup>3</sup> 3e han herd me seyd/  
 And be 3e sykry / he was so weel apayed 1548  
 That weere impossible me to wryte  
 What schulde I lengere / of this cas endyte  
 Arueragus & Dorygene / his wyf  
 In souereyn blysse leedyn forth here lyf 1552  
 Neuere eft ne was there angyr hem be-twene  
 He cherysseth hire ryȝt as sche were a queene  
 And sche was with hym trewe<sup>2</sup> for eueremoore [*2 first trowe*]  
 Of these two folk 3e gete of me no more 1556  
 ¶ Aurelyus that his cost hath al for-lorn  
 Cursith the tyme that euere was he born  
 Allas quod he allas that I be-hyȝte  
 Of purede gold a thousent pound of wighte 1560

On to this philysosphere how schal I do  
 I se namoore but that I am fordo  
 Myn erytage mote I nedis selle  
 And ben a beggere heere may I nat dwelle 1564  
 And schamyn al myn kynrede in this place  
 But I of hym may getyn betere grace  
 But natheles I wele of hym assaye  
 At serteyn dayis 3eer be 3er to paye 1568  
 And thanke hym of his greete curteysye  
 Myn trouthe wele I kepe I wele nat lye  
 With herte sor he goth vnto his cofere  
 And bryngith gold vn-to this philisophere 1572  
 The valew of fyue hunderede pound I gesse  
 And hym be-sechith of hise gentillesse<sup>1</sup> [*Camb. MS. leaves 298, 299, 300, and 301, are cut out.*]  
 [To graunten hym dayes of þe payment [Sloane 1685, on V 157]  
 And sayde Maystere .I. dare wele make a vaunte 1576  
 I fayled neuere of my troupe 3et  
 ffor sykerly my dette shalle be quyt  
 Towardes 3owe howe þat euere I fare  
 To gone a beggere in my kirtel bare 1580  
 But wolde 3e vouche saue vpōn suerte  
 Two 3ere or þre for to respiten me  
 Then were I welle for elles mot I selle  
 Myne herytage þere nys no more to telle 1584  
 Thys phylosophre soberly vnswared  
 And said þus when he þis worde herde  
 haue I not holde Couenaunte vnto þe  
 3ee certes wele and truly quod he 1588  
 haste þou not hade þi lady as þe lykest  
 No no quod he and sorowful he sizeþe  
 What was þe cause telle me yf þou can  
 Aurelius his tale a-none be-gan 1592  
 And tolde hym alle as 3e han hard by-fore  
 hit nedith not to rehersen hit no more  
 he sayd Arueragus of gentilnes [*leaf 157, back*]  
 hade leuere dye in sorowe and dystresse 1596



Than hys wyf were of hir/ troupe false [Sloane 1685]  
 The · sorowe of Doregen he tolde hym also  
 howe · lope hir/ was to beñ a wykked wyf  
 And þat she leuere þat day loste · hir lyf 1600  
 And þat hir/ troupe she · swore þorough Innocence  
 Sche neuere erste herd speke of apparence  
 þat made me han of hir/ so grete pite  
 And riȝt as frely as he sent hir/ me 1604  
 As frely sent I hir/ to hym a-gayne  
 Thys ys alle and somme þere nys no more to sayne  
 Thys phylosofre answered leue broþer  
 Euere yche of/ you did gentilnesse to opere 1608  
 þou arte a squyer/ and he ys a knyȝt  
 But god for-bede for hys blysfuȝt myȝt  
 But ȝif a. Clerk couȝe do a gentel dede  
 As wele as ony of you with/outen drede 1612  
 Sir/ I relese þe þi þousand pounde  
 As þou riȝt now were copen oute of grounde  
 Ne neuere or nowe hadest þou knowe me  
 ffor I wylle not taken a peny of þe 1616  
 ffor alle my craft and nouȝt for my travayle  
 þou haste y-payd wele for my vitayle  
 It ys y-nouȝe and fare wele and haue god day  
 And toke his hors and forth he gothe hys way 1620  
 Lordynges. þis question wylle I axe nowe  
 Whiche was þe most fre as þenkeþe you  
 Now telleþe me or þat I ferthere wende  
 I can no more my tale ys at an ende 1624  
**Here endithe þe Frankeleyns tale]**

*[The Doctor's Tale followed in the Cambridge MS: one leaf only, 302, is left.]*

## GROUP C. FRAGMENT IV.

### § 1. THE DOCTOR'S TALE.

#### CAMBRIDGE MS.

[and begynneth þe tale [Sloane MS 1685,  
on leaf 178]

**T**here was as tellith me Titus lyueus.  
A knyzt/ þat clepid was Virgineus  
Fulfyllyd of honoures and of worpinesse  
And stronge of ffrendes and of grete rychesse [leaf 178, back]  
A douztyr/ he hade by hys wyf/ 5  
And neuere hade he mo in alle hys lyf.  
ffayre was þis mayde in excellent beute  
A-bouen euery wyzt/ þat man may see 8  
ffor nature haþe with souereyne diligence  
ffourmyd hir/ in so grete excellence  
As þouze she wolde say loo I nature  
Thus can I forme and peynt/ a creature 12  
Whan þat/ me lyst/ who can me counterfet/  
Pignalyon nouzt þouze he alwey forge and bete  
Or graue or peynte for y dare wele sayne  
Apollus zepherus shulde worche in vayne 16  
To graue or peynte or forge or bete  
3if/ þei presumyd me forto conterfete  
ffor he þat ys þe formour principal  
Hath made me his Viker/ general 20  
To forme and peynte eche erthly creature  
Ryzt/ as me lyste for alle thynges ys in my cure  
Vnder/ þe mone þat may wane or waxe  
And for my werke no þenge wille I axe 24

My lord/ and I ben fully at accorde [Sloane MS 1625]  
 I made hir/ to þe worshiþe of my lord  
 So do I alle myne opere creatures ·  
 Of what coloure þei be or what figures 28  
 þus semethe me þat nature wolle say  
 This mayde was of/ age twelue ȝeere & twey  
 In whiche þat nature hath suche delyte  
 For riȝt/ as she can peynte as lyly white 32  
 And rudy as roose riȝt *with* suche paynture  
 She paynteth hath þis noble creature  
 Or she was borne vpon hir/ lymes fre  
 Were also bryȝt/ as suche coloures shuld be 36  
 And Phebus dyed hade hir/ tressys grete  
 Lyke to þe streames of his bornyd heete  
 And ȝif þat excellent was hir/ beaute ·  
 A þousand sithe more Vertuose was she [leaf 179] 40  
 In her/ ne lacked no condicioun  
 That/ ys to preyse as by discrecioun  
 As wele in body as goste Chast was she  
 ffor whiche she floured in Virgynite 44  
*With* alle humilite and abstynence  
*With* alle temperance & pacience  
*With* mesure eke and berynge of array  
 Discrete she was in answerynge alway 48  
 Though she were wys as Pallas dar I sayne  
 hir/ faucond eke fulle womanly & pleyne  
 None counterfetid termes hade she  
 To seme wys but / aftyr/ hir/ degre 52  
 Sche spake alle hir/ wordes more and lesse  
 Sounynge in vertu and in gentilnesse  
 Constant in hert / and euere in besynesse 56  
 Schamefaste she was in maydens shamefastnesse 55  
 To dryue hir/ oute of hir/ slougardye  
 Bacus hade of/ hir/ mouthe no Maystrie  
 ffor wylle and þouȝt done Venus encrece  
 As men in fyre wille casten oyle or grece 60

And of/ hir/ owen vertu vnconstreyned [Sloane MS 1685]  
 She hathe fulle ofte tyme hir/ seeke feyned  
 ffor þat she wolde fle þe companye  
 Where likly was to treten of foly 64  
 As ys at feestes Reueles and at daunces  
 þat/ bene occasions of/ dalyaunces  
 Suche thynges maken · Chyldren for to be  
 To sone rype and bolde as men may see 68  
 Whyche ys fulle peryllous and hath bene yore  
 ffor alle to sone may she lerne lore  
 Of/ boldenesse whan she ys a wyf  
 And 3e maystresses in youre olde lyf 72  
 þat/ lordes douȝters han in gouernaunce  
 Ne taketh of/ my worde no displesaunce  
 Thynges þat ben sette in gouernynge ·  
 Of lordes douȝters only for two thynges [leaf 179, back] 76  
 Oþer for 3e han kepte youre honeste  
 Oþere elles 3e han fallen in frelete  
 And knowen wele ynouȝe þe olde daunce  
 And conne for-sake fully myschaunce 80  
 ffor euermo · þerfore for crystes sake  
 kepith wele þo · þat 3e Vndirtake  
 A theefe of veneson þat hath for-laft  
 his lycouresnesse and alle his þefes craft 84  
 kan kepe a forest best/ of any man  
 Nowe kepeth hem wel for and 3e wele kan  
 lokeþe wele þat to no vice 3e assent  
 Leest/ 3e be dampned for youre euel entent 88  
 ffor who so dothe a traytour ys certayn  
 And taketh of þat þat I shal sayn  
 Of/ alle tresoun suffreyn pestelence  
 Ys whan a wyȝt be-trayth Innocence 92  
 3e fadres and 3e modres eke also  
 Thogh 3e haue Childre by it one or two  
 3oure ys þe charge of alle her/ sufferaunce  
 Whiles þei bene vnder/ gouernaunce 96

Be ware þat be ensample of/ youre liuynges [Sloane MS 1655]  
 Outher by negligence of Chastisyng  
 That þei ne peryssh for I dare wele say  
 3if þat/ þei done 3e shulle fulle sore obeye 100  
 Vnder .a. sheperd softe and negligente  
 The wolfe hath many an sheepe & lambe to-rente  
 Suffiseth on · ensample nowe as here  
 ffor I mote turne a-yeine to my matere 104  
 Thys mayde of whiche I telle my tale expresse  
 Sche kepte hir selfe hir/ nedeth no maystresse  
 ffor in hir lyuynges maydens myȝt/ rede  
 As in a booke euery gode worde & dede 108  
 That longethe to a mayde vertuous  
 Sche was so prudent and so bounteous ·  
 ffor whiche oute spronge on euery syde  
 Bothe of hir/ beaute and of hir/ bounte wyde [leaf 180] 112  
 þat/ þorouze þe londe þei preysed hir eccheone  
 That/ louyd vertu safe Envie allone  
 þat/ sorye ys of opere mennes wele  
 And glad ys of hys sorowe and vnhele 116  
 The docture maketh þis discripcioun  
 Thys mayde wente on a day into þe toun  
 Toward þe temple with hir/ moder/ dere  
 As ys of yonge maydens þe manere 120  
 // Now was þere a Iustice in þe toun  
 þat/ gouvernour was of þat regioun  
 And so by-felle thys Iuge hys eyzen caste  
 Vpon þis mayde avisyng hir/ fulle faste 124  
 As she come forth by þere þe Iuge stode  
 A-none his hert chaungeth and hys mode  
 So was he/ cauȝt/ with beaute of þis mayde  
 And to hym · self/ fulle pryuely he saide 128  
 Thys mayde shalle be myne for ony man  
 A-noone þe feende in-to hys hert/ ranne  
 And tauȝte hym sodeynly by/ what sleȝt/  
 þe mayde to hys purpos wyne he myȝt/ 132



ffor certes by no force ne by no mede [Sloane MS 1685]  
 hym þouȝt he was not able for to spede  
 ffor he was stronge of frendes and eke she  
 Confermyd was in suche souereyne beaute 136  
 þat/ wele he wyste he myȝt/ hir/ nevere wynne  
 As for to make hir *with* hir/ body synne  
 ffor whiche *with* grete deliberacioun  
 he sent/ aftyr/ a Clerk/ in-to þe toun 140  
 The whiche he knewe for sotelle and for bolde  
 Thys Iuge vnto þis Clerk his tale hathe tolde  
 I secre wyse and made hym to assure  
 he shulde telle it to no creature 144  
 And ȝif/ he did he shulde lese hys hede  
 Whan ascended was þis cursid reede  
 Glad was þe Iuge and made glad chere  
 And ȝafe hym ȝiftes precious & dere [leaf 180, back] 148  
 Whan shapen was alle þis conspiracie  
 ffrom poynt to poynt how þat his lecherie  
 Perfourmed shulde be fulle sotelly  
 As ȝe shalle here and afterward opunly 152  
 home gothe þis. Clerk þat hiȝt Claudius.  
 Thys false Iuge þat/ hiȝt Apius.  
 So was hys name for it ys no fable  
 But/ knowen for an historialle þenge notable 156  
 The sentence of/ hit sothe ys oute of/ doute  
 Thys false Iuge gothe nowe faste a-boute  
 To hasten his delyte al þat/ he may  
 And se by-felle sone after/ on a day 160  
 Thys false Iuge as tellethe vs þe storie  
 As he was wonte sat in his consistorie  
 And ȝaue his domes vpon sundry caas.  
 This false clerke come forthe a wele gode paas. 164  
 And said lord ȝif it be youre wille  
 ȝis dothe me riȝt/ vpon þis pitous bille] [Sloane extract ends]  
 In which I pleyne vp-on virginus [Camb. Univ. Lib. MS  
 And ȝif he wele seyn it is not thus Gg. 4. 27, leaf 302] 168

I wele it preue / & fynde it good wisesse  
 That soth is that myn bille wele expresse  
 The Iuge answerde / of this in his absence  
 I may not ȝeue diffynytive sentence 172  
 Lat do hym calle & I wele gladli here  
 Thow schalt haue alle ryȝt & no wrong heere  
 Virgynyus cam to wete the Iugis wille  
 And ryȝt a-non was rad this curssede bylle 176  
 The sentence of it was as ȝe schul here  
 To ȝow myn lord sire apius so deere  
 Schewith ȝoure poure seruau[n]t claudyus  
 How that a knygh[t] / callyd virgynyus 180  
 A-geyns the lawe a-geyn alle equitye  
 Holdyth expres a-geyn the wil of me  
 Myn seruant which that 'is myn' thral be ryȝt [1—1 later]  
 Whiche from myn hous was stole vp-on a nyȝt 184  
 Whil that sche was ful ȝyng this wele I preue  
 By wisesse lord so that it nat ȝow greue  
 Sche nys his doughty[r] / nat what so he seye  
 Wherefore to ȝow myn lord ȝe Iuge I preye 188  
 ȝilde me my thral / ȝif þat it be ȝoure wille  
 Lo this was al the sentens of his bille  
 Virginius gan vp-on the cherl be-holde  
 But hastyly er he his tale tolde 192  
 And wolde a preued it as schulde a knyȝt  
 And ek by wisesse of manye a wight  
 That it was fals that seyde his aduersarye  
 This cursede Iuge wolde no thyng tarye 196  
 Ne here a word more of virginius  
 But ȝaf his Iugement & seyde thus  
 I deme a-noon / this cherl his seruau[n]t haue  
 Thow schalt no lengere / in thyn hous<sup>2</sup> here saue<sup>3</sup> [2 ons & 2—3  
corrected]  
 Go brynge hire forth / & putte hire in owere warde 201  
 This cherl schal han / his thral this I awrarde  
 And whan this worthi / knyȝt virgynyus  
 Thour sentence / of this Iustyse Apyus 204

Muste be forse his dere douȝtyr ȝeuyn [leaf 302, back]  
 Vn-to the Iuge in lecherye to lyuyn  
 He goth hym hom & settyth hym in his halle  
 And leet a-non his deere douȝtyr calle 208  
 And with a face ded as aschyn colde  
 Vp-on hire humble face he gan by-holde  
 With faderys pite styngynge thour his herte  
 Al wolde he not from his purpos conuerte 212  
 Douȝtyr quod he virginia bi thyn name  
 There been two woyis othir ded or schame  
 That þou muste suffere allas that I was bore  
 ffor neuere thow deseruedist wherefore 216  
 To deyen with a swerd or wit a knyf  
 O deere douȝtyr endere of myn lyf  
 Which I haue fostered vp with swich plesaunce  
 That thow were neuere out of myn remembraunce 220  
 O douȝtyr<sup>1</sup> which that art myn laste wo [<sup>1</sup> yr corrected]  
 And in myn lyf myn laste Ioye also  
 O gemme of chastite in pacience  
 Take thow thyn deth for this is myn sentence 224  
 ffor loue & not for hate þou muste be deed  
 Myn pitous hand mote smytyn of thyn heed  
 Allas that euere apius the say  
 Thus hath he falsely Iuged the to day 228  
 And tolde hire al the case as ȝe be-fore<sup>2</sup>. [<sup>2</sup> e later]  
 Han herd / nought nedyth for to telle it more.  
 O mercy dere fadyr quod this mayde. 231  
 And with that word sche bothe<sup>3</sup> hire armys layde [<sup>3</sup> he corr.]  
 Aboute his nekke as sche was wont to do.  
 The teris broste out of hise eyen two  
 And seyde goode fadyr schal I deye  
 Is there no grace is there no remedye 236  
 No certis dere douȝtyr myn quod he  
 Thanne ȝeue me leue fadyr myn quod sche  
 Myn deth for to compleyne a lytyl space  
 Parde Iepte ȝaf his douȝtyr grace 240

ffor to compleyne er he hire slow allas  
 And god it wot no thyng was hire trespas [Camb. MS has lost  
2 leaves]  
 [But þat she ranne hir/ fadir/ fyrst/ to see [Sloane MS 1685,  
on leaf 181, back]  
 To welcome hym with grete sollempnite 244  
 And with þat worde she felle on swoune a-noone  
 And after/ whan hir/ swonyng was gone  
 Sche risethe vp and to hir/ fadir/ sayde  
 Blessyd be god þat I shalle deye a mayde 248  
 3if/ me my dethe or þat/ I haue a shame  
 Dothe with youre childe youre wille of goddos name  
 And with þat worde she praythe fulle ofte  
 þat with his swerde he shulde smyte hir/ softe 252  
 And with þat/ worde on swone doune she felle  
 Hir fadyr/ with fulle sorowfulle hert/ and fel  
 Hir/ heede of/ smote and by þe top it hent/  
 And to þe Iuge he yaue it/ to present [leaf 182] 256  
 As he sat in hys dome in consistorie  
 What þe Iuge it sawe as saithe þe storie  
 He bade take hym and honge hym also faste  
 But riȝt/ a-nōōn alle þe peple in þraste 260  
 To saue þe knyȝt/ for reuthe and for pite  
 ffor knowen was þe folys Iniquyte  
 The peple a-none hade suspecte in þis thyng  
 By manere of thys Clerkes chalengynge 264  
 That it was by þe assent/ of Apius ·  
 They wyste wele þat he was lecherous ·  
 ffor whiche vnto þis Apius þei gone  
 And kysten hym in prison riȝt anone 268  
 Where as he slouȝe hym self/ and claudius  
 þat seruaunt was vnto þis apius ·  
 Was demed for [to] hange vpon a tre  
 But Virgineus of/ his grete pite 272  
 Prayde for hym þat he was exiled  
 And elles certes he hade be begyled ·  
 The remenaunt were honged more & lesse  
 þat consentid weren to his cursidnesse 276

here may men see how synne hathe hys merite [Sloane MS 1685]

Be ware for no man wote howe god wille smyte

In no degre ne in whiche manere wyse .

The worne of conscience wylle aryse 280

Of wycked lyf/ pouze it/ so preue be

þat/ no man woote of hit but god and he .

Wheþere he be lewed man or leryd

he note howe sone þat he may ben a-feryd . 284

Therfore I rede you þis counselle take

ffor-sakeþe synne or synne you for-sake

**Here endethe þe tale of þe Mayster of phisyk/**



[Sloane MS 1685, on leaf 182.]

## [Here begynneth þe prologge of/ þe Perdonere

<sup>1</sup> Oure oste gan swere as he were woode [? MS Z, E, or I.]  
 Harrowe quod he by nayles and by bloode 288  
 Thys was a false Clerk/ and a false Iustice

As shamefulle deth as tonge can deuynse [leaf 182, back]

Come to þe Iustice and hir/ aduocase  
 Algate þis sely woman ys slayne Alas. 292

Alas [to] dere a-bouȝte she Bewte  
 Wherfore I say al day þat men may see  
 þat ȝift/ of fortune or of nature  
 Ben cause of/ dethe of many a creature 296

[ . . . . .  
 . . . . . no gap in the MS.]

As bothe ȝiftes as I speke of nowe  
 Men han fulle ofte more harme þen prowē 300

But/ truly myn owen Maystre dere  
 Thys ys a pitous tale forto here  
 But natheles passe ouere ys no force  
 I pray to god so saue þi gentel corse 304

And þine vrynales/ and þyne Ioudans  
 Thyne ypocras and eke þi galyans  
 And euery Boxe fulle of þi letuary  
 God blesse hem and oure lady seynt/ mary 308

So mot I the þou art/ a propre man  
 And I-lyke a prelate be seynt Runyan  
 Saue þat/ I kon not/ speke wele in terme  
 But/ wele I woote þou doest/ myn hert' erme 312

þat/ I haue almoste cauȝt' a Cardiache  
 By corps bones but/ yf/ I haue treacle  
 Or. elles a drauȝt/ of moost' or corny ale  
 Or but/ I here a-none a mery tale 316

My hert/ ys loste for pite of þis mayde [Sloane MS 1685]  
 Than belamy Iohn pardoner/ he sayd  
 Telle vs some myrthe or some Iapes here anone  
 hit shal be done *quod* he by seynt/ runyon 320  
 But first/ *quod*/ he at þe next/ ale stake  
 I wol bothe dryng and ete of a kake  
 But/ riȝt anone þise gentelys gan to crye  
 Nay let/ hym telle vs of/ no rebaudrye 324  
 Tel vs some moral thenge þat/ we may here  
 Some wytte and þan wille we gladly here  
 I graunte I-wys *quod* he but/ I mot/ thynke  
 Vpon some honest/ thyng whyle þat I drynke [leaf 188] 328

[Here] endeth þe Prolooge

[Sloane MS 1685, on leaf 183.]

## and begynneth þe tale

**L**or]dynges quod/ he in Chirche whan I preche  
 [I] peyne me to haue an hautyn speche  
 [And] rynges it/ oute as rounde as goth a belle  
 ffor I con alle by roote þat I telle 332  
 [My teme] ys alle-way on and euere was  
 Radix *omnium* malorum est cupiditas  
 fyrst/ I pronounce whens þat I come  
 And þan my bulles shewen alle and somme 336  
 Oure lege lordes seal on my patent  
 þat/ shewe I fyrst/ my body to warant/  
 That no man be so bolde prest nor Clerk  
 Me to disturbe of/ crystes holy werke 340  
 And after þat telle I forthe my tales  
 Bulles of Popes and of/ Cardynales  
 Of Patryarkes and Bysshopes I shewe  
 And in laten I speke wordes fewe 344  
 To sauere with my predicacioun  
 And forto styrre men to deuocioun  
 þan shewe I forth my longe Cristal stones  
 I-crommed fulle of/ cloutys and of bones 348  
 Relikes þei bene as wene þei ychone  
 þan haue I in laton a shulder bone  
 Whiche þat was an holy Iewes shepe  
 Goode men say I take at my wordes kepe 352  
 3if þat þis bone be wasshen in a welle  
 3if/ cowe or Calf/ shepe or Ox swelle  
 þat any worme hathe ete or stonge  
 A-boute þe herte or elles þe longe 356

And it is hole a-none and ferthermore [Sloane MS 1685]  
 Of/ pockes and of scabbe and of/ euery sore  
 Shaſt euery shepe be hole þat of þis welle  
 Drenkyth a draught/ take hede what I telle 360  
 3if þat þe godeman þat þe bestes ouzte  
 Wolle euery wooke or þat/ þe Cok/ hym crouthe/  
 ffastyng drynke of/ þis welle a drauȝt/ [leaf 183, back]  
 As þilke holy Iewe oure eldres tauȝt/ 364  
 hys beestes and hys store shal multeplie  
 And sires also it heleth Ielousey  
 And þouȝe a man be fallen in a Ielouse rage  
 let maken with þis water/ hys potage 368  
 And neuere shal he hys wyf mystruste  
 Thouȝe he þe sothe of his defaute wyste  
 Alle hade she taken preestes two or thre  
 here ys a myteyne eke þat/ ye may se 372  
 he þat/ hys honde wylle putte in his myteyne  
 he shalle haue multiplyenge in his greyne  
 Whan he hathe sowen be it Whete or Otes  
 So þat/ he brynge me gode pans or elles grotes 376  
 And men and women oo þenge I warne you  
 3if/ ony wiȝt/ be in þis Chirche nowe  
 þat/ hathe done synne horrible þat/ he  
 Dare not/ for shame of it/ shryuen be 380  
 Or ony woman be she yonge or olde  
 þat/ hath made hir/ husbonde Cokewolde  
 Suche folke shul haue no power ne no grace  
 To offre to my rellekes in þis place 384  
 And who fyndeth hym oute of suche blame  
 They wol come vp and offre in goddes name] [Sloane extract ends]  
 And I assolie hym be the autorite [Camb. Univ. Lib. MS  
 Gg. 4. 27, leaf 305]  
 Which that by bulle is grauntid on-to me 388  
 By this gaude haue I wonne ȝeer be ȝeer  
 An hunderede mark sythe I was pardounneer  
 I stonde lyk a clerk in myn pulpet  
 And whan that the lewede peple is doun I-set 392

I preche so as 3e han herd by-fore  
 And telle an hunderede false Iapis more  
 Thanne peyne I me to streche forth myn nekke  
 And est & west vp-on the peple I bekke 396  
 As doth a douue syttyng on a berne  
 Myne handys & myn tunge goon so 3erne  
 That it is Ioye to se myn besynesse  
 Of auarice & of swich cursedenesse 400  
 Is al myn prechyng for to makyn hem fre  
 To 3eun here penys & nameli on-to me  
 ffor myn entent is not but for to wyne  
 And no thyng for correccioun of synne 404  
 I rekke neuere whanne that they been beryed  
 Thow tha<sup>t</sup> here soulis goon a blakeberyed [1 corrected]  
 ffor certis manye a predicacioun  
 Comyth ofte of euele entencioun 408  
 Some for plesaunce of folk & flaterye  
 To been a-vansed be ypocrysie  
 And some for veynglorie & some for hate  
 And whanne I dar non othere woyis debate 412  
 Thanne wele I styng men with myn tunge smerte  
 In prechyng so that I schal nat a-sterre  
 To been defamyd falsely that he  
 Hath trespassed to myne brothir or to me 416  
 ffor thow I telle nat his proper name  
 Men schal wel knowe þat it is the same  
 By sygnys & be othere circumstauncis  
 Thus quyte I folk that don vs displesauncis 420  
 Thus spitte I out myn venym vndyr hewe  
 Of holynesse to semyn holy & trewe  
 But schortely myn entent I wele deuyse  
 I preche of no thyng but of coueytise 424  
 Therefore myn teme is 3it & euere was [leaf 305, back]  
 Radix malorum est cupiditas  
 Thus can I preche a-3en the same vice  
 Whiche that I vse & that is aueryce 428



But thow myn self be gilty in that synne  
 3it can I make othere folk to twynne  
 from aueryce & sore to repente  
 But that is nat myn pryncipal entente 432  
 I preche no thyng but for coueytyse  
 Of this matire it ouzte I-nogh suffise  
 Thanne telle I hem ensaumplys many on  
 Of olde storyis long tyme a goon 436  
 ffor lewede peple louyn talys olde  
 Sweche thyngis can they wel reporte & holde  
 What trowe 3e that whilis that I may preche  
 And wynne gold & syluyr for I teche 440  
 That I wele lyue in pouerte wilfully  
 Nay nay I thouzte it neuere trewely  
 ffor I wele preche & begge in sundery landis  
 I wele don no labour *with* mynne handys 444  
 Ne make basketys & lyue therby  
 By cause I wele nat beggen ydely  
 I wele none of the apostelys countyrfete  
 I wele haue monye / wolfe / cheese / & wheete 448  
 Al weere it 3euyne of the poreste page  
 Or of the poreste wedew in a village  
 Al schulde hire chylderyn sterue for famyne  
 Nay I wele drynke licour of the <sup>1</sup>vyne [<sup>1</sup> v, *first w*] 452  
 And haue a Ioly wenche in euery toun  
 But herkenyth lordyngis in conclusioun  
 3oure lykyng is that I schal telle a tale  
 Now haue I dronke a draught of corny ale 456  
 By god I hope I schal 3owe telle a thyng  
 That schal be resoun been at 3oure lykyng  
 ffor thow myn self be a ful vicious man  
 A moral tale 3it I 3ow telle can 460  
 Whiche I am wonet to preche for to wynne  
 Now holde 3oure pes myn tale I wele begynne

[*Painting of the Pardoner.*]

[leaf 306]

**Here begynnynth the Pardounner his tale**[<sup>1</sup> *The I runs the length of the page*]

<sup>1</sup> I N flanderys whilhom dwellede a cumpaynye  
 Of 3onge folk that hauntedyn folye 464  
 As ryot hasard stewys & tauernys  
 Where as with harpys lutys & geternys  
 They daunce & pleye at deis bothe day & nyght  
 And ete & drynke also ouyr here myȝt 468  
 Thoure whiche they don the deuyl sacryfise  
 With-inne that deuyl<sup>2</sup> temple in<sup>2</sup> cursede wyse [<sup>2-3</sup> corrected]  
 By superfluyte / abominable  
 Here othis been so greete & so dampnable 472  
 That it is gresely for to here hem swere  
 Oure blyssede lordis body they to-tere  
 Hem thouȝte that Iewis rente hym not I-nough  
 And eche of hem at otherys synne lough 476  
 And thanne ryȝt a-non / comyn Tumbesteris  
 ffetyse & smale & ȝynge frutesteris  
 Syngeris with harpis / Baudis wafereris 479  
 Whiche been / the <sup>3</sup>werray deuyl<sup>3</sup> offiseris<sup>3</sup> [<sup>3-3</sup> corrected]  
 To kyndeleye & blowe the fyr of lecherye [leaf 306, back]  
 That is annexed on-to Glotenye  
 The holy writ take I to witnesse  
 That luxurye is in wyn & dronkenesse 484  
 Lo how that dronkyn looth vnkyndely  
 Lay by his doughterys two on-wityngely  
 So dronke he was he nyste what he wrouȝte  
 Herodes who so weel the storyis souȝte 488

[ . . . . . ]

. . . . . *no spurious lines in this MS.*]

Whan he of wyn was replet at his feste	489
Rygh at his owene table he ȝaf his heste	
To slen the Baptist Ioh̃n ful gilteles	
Senek seyth a good word douteles	Seneca. 492
He seyth he can no difference fynde	
By-twixe a man that is out of his mynde	
And a man which that is dronkelewe	
But that wodnesse I-fallyn in a schrewe	496
Perseueryth lengere than doth dronkenesse	
O glotenye ful of cursedenesse	
O cause fyrst of oure confusioun	
O original of oure dampnacioun	500
Til Cryst hadde bouȝt vs with his blod a-geyn	
Lo how deere schortely for to seyn	
Abovghte was thilk cursede vilanye	
Corrup was al this world for glotenye	504
Adam oure fadyr & his wif also	
ffrom paradys to labour & to wo	
Were dreuyn for that vice it is no drede	
ffor whil that adam fasted as I rede	508
He was in paradys / & thil that he	
Eet of the freut defendit of the tre	
A-non he was out cast to wo & pyne	
O glotenye on the / wel ouȝte vs pleyne	512
O wiste a man how manye maladyis	
ffolewyn <sup>1</sup> of exces & of glotenyis	[ <sup>1</sup> e inserted]
He wolde been the moore mesurable	
Of his dyete syttynge at his table	516
Allas the schorte throte the tendere mouth	
Makyth that est & west & north & South	
In erthe in Ayr / in watyr men to swynke	[leaf 507]
To gete a glotoun / deinte mete & drynke	520
Of this matire / O paul weel canst thow trete	
Mete on-to wombe / & wombe weel vn-to mete	
Schal god distroyen / bothe as paul seyth.	
Allas a foul thyng is it / be myn feith	524

To seye this word / & foulere is the dede  
 Whan man so drynkyth / of the white & reede  
 That of his throte / he makyth his priue  
 Thurgh thilke cursede / superfluite 528  
 The apostele wepynge / seyth ful pytously  
 T[h]ere walkyn manye / of whiche 3ow told haue I  
 I seye it now / wepynge with pitous woys  
 There been enemyis / of crystis croys 532  
 Of whiche the ende is deth / wombe is here god  
 O wombe / O bely / O stynkyng Cod  
 ffulfylde of dunge & of corrupeioun  
 At eythyr ende of the foul is the soun 536  
 How greet labour & cost is the to fynde  
 These cookis<sup>1</sup> how they stampe & streyne & grynde [<sup>1</sup> is corr.]  
 And turnyn substauns in-to accident  
 To fulfille al the lykerous talent 540  
 Out of the harde bonys knocke they  
 The mary for thei caste nat a-wey  
 That may goon thurgh the golet softe & soote  
 Of spicerye / of lef / of bark / of roote 544  
 Schal been his saus / makyd bi delyt  
 To make hym 3it / a newere apetit  
 But certis he that / hauntyth swyche delicis  
 Is ded whil that he / lyuyth in swiche viciis 548  
 A lecherous thyng / is wyn and<sup>2</sup> dronkenesse [<sup>2</sup> and later]  
 Is ful of stryuyng & of wrechedenesse  
 O dronke man / disfigured is thyn face  
 Sour is thyn breth / foul art þou to enbrace 552  
 And thour thyn dronke nose / semyth the soun  
 As thou þou seydyt euere / sampson Sampson  
 And 3it god wot/ Sampson drank neuere no wyn  
 Thow fallist / as it weere a stekyd swyn 556  
 Thyn tunge is lost & al thyn honeste cure [leaf 307, back]  
 ffor drunkenesse is verray sepulture  
 Oof mannys wit & his discrecioun  
 In whom that drynk hath dominacioun 560

He can no conseyll kepe it is no drede  
 Now kepe 3ow from the white & from the reede  
 And namely from the white wyn of lepe  
 That is to selle in fiche streete or in Chepe 564  
 This wyn of spayne crepyth subtilly  
 In othere wynys growynge faste by  
 Of which there rysith swich fumosite  
 That whan a man haue dronkyn drauhtis thre 568  
 And weneth that he be at hom in chepe  
 He is in spayne ryzt at the toun of leepe  
 Nat at rochel / ne at burdeux toun  
 And thanne wele he seye sampson sampson 572  
 But herkenyth lordyngis o word I 3ow preye  
 That alle the souereyn actis dar I seye  
 Of victoryis in the olde testament  
 Thurgh verray god that is omnypotent 576  
 Were don in abstinence & in preyere  
 Lokyth the bible & there 3e may it leere  
 Loke attilla the greete conquerour  
 Deyede in his slep / with schame & dishonour 580  
 Bledynge at his nose in dronkenesse  
 A Capitayn schulde leue in soberenesse  
 And ouyr al this / aviseth 3ow ryzt weel  
 What was comaundit to Lamuel 584  
 Nat Samuel but Lamuel seye I  
 Redyth the byble / & fynde it expresly  
 Of wyn 3euynge to hem that han iustise  
 Namore of this for it may I-nough suffyse 588  
 And now that I haue spokyn of glotenye  
 Now wele I 3ow defende hasarderye  
 Hasard is verray modyr of lesyngis  
 And of disseyd & cursed forsweyngis 592  
 Blaspheme of Cryst manslauzt & wast also  
 Of catel of tyme / & ferthere mo  
 ¶ It is repref & contrarye to honour [leaf 308]  
 ffor to ben holdyn a comoun hasardour 596



And euere the heyere he is of <sup>1</sup>estat<sup>1</sup> [1—1 corrected]  
 The moore is he holdyn desolat  
 3if that a prynce vseth hasarderye  
 In alle gouernaunce & polycie 600  
 He is as be comune opinioun  
 I-holde the lesse in reputacioun  
 Stilboun þat was a wys Embassadour  
 Was sent to Corenthe in ful greet honour 604  
 ffrom latidomye to makyn hire allyaunce  
 And whan he cam hym happede par chaunce  
 That alle the gretteste that were of that lond  
 Pleyinge at the hasard he hem fond 608  
 ffor which as soone as it myghte be  
 He stal hym hom a-geyn in-to his cuntre  
 ¶ And seyde there wel I nat leese myn name  
 Nay wil nat take on me so greet diffame 612  
 3ow for to a-lye vn-to none hasardourys  
 Sendyth othere wyse embassadourys  
 ffor be myn trouthe me were leuere dye  
 Than I 3ow schulde to hasardourys alye 616  
 ffor 3e that been so glorious in honourys  
 Schal not a-lye 3ow to hasardourys  
 By myn wil ne as bi myn trettee  
 This wyse philisophere thus seyde he 620  
 Loke ek that to the kyng demetryus  
 The kyng of Parthes as the bok seyth vs  
 Sente hym a payre of deis of gold in scorn  
 ffor he hadde vsed hasard there by-forn 624  
 ffor which he held his glorye or his renoun  
 At no valu or reputacioun  
 ¶ Lordis may fynde other maner pley  
 Honeste I-now to dryue the day a-wey 628  
 Now wele I speke of othes false & greeete  
 A word or two as olde bokys trete  
 Greet swerynge is a thyng abhominable  
 And fals swerynge <sup>2</sup>is 3it<sup>2</sup> more repreuable [2—2 correcte.] 632

The hye god<sup>1</sup> forbad swerynge at al [<sup>1</sup> *first* good] [leaf 308, back]  
 Witenesse of Mathew but in special  
 Of swerynge seyth the holy Ieremye  
 Thow schalt swere soth thynne othis & not lye 636  
 And swere in dom & ek in ryghtwysnesse  
 But ydele swerynge is a cursedenesse  
 Bi-hold & se that in the ferste table  
 Of heye goddys hestis honourable 640  
 How that the secounde heste of hym is this  
 Take nat myn name in idil or a-mys  
 Lo rathere he forbedyth sweche swerynge  
 Than homyside or manye a cursede thyng 644  
 I seye that as by ordere thus it standith  
 This knowith that his bokys vndirstonde  
 How that the secunde heste of god is that  
 And ferthere ouyr / I wele the telle al plat 648  
 That vengeance schal nat passe from his hous  
 That of hise othis is to outrageous  
 By godys precyus herte & by hise naylys  
 And by the blod o crist that is in haylys 652  
 Seuene is myn chaunce / & thyn is synk & treye  
 By godys armys 3if thow falsely pheye  
 This daggar schal thorgh out thyn herte go  
 This freut comyth of þe bicche bonys two 656  
 fforswerynge Ire falsenesse homysyde  
 Now for the loue of cryst þat for vs deyede  
 Leveth 3oure swerynge bothe greete & smale  
 But serys now wele I telle forth myn tale 660  
 Theise riotourys thre of whiche I telle  
 Longe erst er pryme rong the belle  
 Were sett hem in a tauerne to drynke 663  
 And as the[y] sat / they herde a belle <sup>2</sup>clynke<sup>2</sup> [→ *later*]  
 By-forn a cors was caryed to his graue  
 That on of hem gan callyn to his knaue  
 Go bet quod he and axe redyly  
 What cors is this that caryed is forby 668

And loke that thow reporte his name wel  
 Sere quod this boy it nedyth neuere a deel  
 It was me told er ȝe cam here thre ouris [leaf 309]  
 He was parde an old felawe of ouris 672  
 And sodeynly he was I-slayn to nyght  
 ffor-dronke as he sat on his bench vp ryȝt  
 There cam a priue thef men clepyn deth  
 That in this cuntre al the peple sleth 676  
 And with his spere he smot his herte atwo  
 And wente his weie with-outyn wordis mo  
 And maystir er ȝe come in his presence 680  
 He hath a thousent slayn this pestelence 679  
 Methynkyth that it were necessarye  
 ffor to ben war of swich an aduersarye  
 Beth redy for to mete hym euere more  
 Thus thaute me myn dame I seye nomore 684  
 Be seynte marie seyde this tauernere  
 The child seyth soth for he hath slayn this ȝere  
 Hene ouyr a myle with-inne a greet village  
 Bothe man & woman child & hewe & page 688  
 I trowe his habitacioun be there  
 To been a-vised greet wisdam it weere  
 Er that he deyede a man a dishonour  
 ¶ Ye goddis armys quod this riotour 692  
 Is it swich peril with hym for to mete  
 I schal hym seeke by woye & ek bi streete  
 I make a wow to goddys digne bonys  
 Herkenyth felawis we thre been a-lonys 696  
 Lat ych of vs holdyn vp his hand to othir  
 And eche of vs bi-comyn otherys brothir  
 And we wele sleen this false traytour deth  
 He schal been slayn he that so manye sleth 700  
 By godis dygnete er it be nygh  
 To-gederys han these thre here treuthes plyght  
 To lyuyn & deyen eche of hem with othyr  
 As though he were his owe bore brothir 704

And vp they stertyn & dronkyn in this rage  
 And forth they gon towardys that village  
 Of whiche the tauerner hadde spoke by-forn  
 And manye a gresely oth thanne han they sworn 708  
 And crystis blyssede body they to-rente [leaf 309, back]  
 Deth schal ben ded ȝif they may hym hente  
 Whan they han goon nat fully half a myle  
 Ryght as they woldyn a trodyn ouyr a style 712  
 An old man & a poure 'with hem' mette [1—1 corrected]  
 This olde man ful mekely hem grette  
 And seydyn thus now lordis god ȝow see  
 The proudeste of these ryatourys three 716  
 Answerede a-gayn what cherl with sory grace  
 Why art thou for-wrappid saue thyn face  
 Why lyggist thou so longe in so greet age  
 This olde man gan lokyn in his visage 720  
 And seyde thus for I ne can nat fynde  
 A man thou I walkede in-to ynde  
 Neythir in cete ne in non village  
 That wolde chaunge his ȝouthes for myn age 724  
 And therfore mote I holde myn age styлле  
 As long tyme as it is godys wille  
 Ne deth allas wele nat han myn lyf  
 Thus walke I lych a recheles caytyf 728  
 And on the ground whiche is myn moderys gate  
 I knokke with myn staf bothe erly & late  
 And seye leue modyr lete me in  
 Lo how I vanyche bothe flesch & blood & skyn 732  
 Allas whanne schal myne bonys been at reste  
 Modyr with ȝow wolde I schaunge myn cheste  
 That in myn chaumbre long tyme hath be  
 ȝa for an heyre clout to wrappe me 736  
 But ȝit to me ȝe wele nat do that grace  
 ffor which ful pale & welkid is myn face  
 But syrys to ȝow it is no curteysye  
 To spekyn to an old man vilanye 740



But he trespace in word or ellis in dede  
 In holy wryt ye may youre seluyn weel reede  
 [A-geyns an olde man / hoor vp-on his hed [Cambr. Univ. MS  
Dd. 4. 24, leaf 147]  
 3e shulde aryse / wherfore I 3eue 3ow red] 744  
 Ne doth vn-to an old man noon harm now  
 Na more than 3e wolde men dede to 3ow  
 In age 3if that 3e so longe a-byde  
 And god be wyth 3ow where 3e go or ryde 748  
 I mot go thedyr there I haue to go [leaf 310]  
 ¶ Nay olde cherl by god thow schat nat so  
 Seyde this othir hasardour a-non  
 Thow partist nat so lyztely by seynt Iohn 752  
 Thow speke ryzt now of thilke traytour deth  
 That in oure cuntre alle oure frendys sleth  
 Haue here myn treuthe as thow art his espie  
 Telle where he is / or / thow schalt it a-bye 756  
 By god & by holye sacrement  
 ffor sothly thow art of his assent  
 To sleen vs 3onge folk thow false thef  
 Now seris quod he syn that ye be so lef 760  
 To fynde deth turne vp this crokede wey  
 ffor in that groue I lefte hym by myn fey  
 Vndyr a tre & there he wolde a-byde  
 Nat for youre bost he wele hym nat hyde 764  
 Se ye that ook ryzt there ye schul hym fynde  
 God saue yow that boughte a-zen man-kynde  
 And 3ow a-mende thus seyde this olde man  
 ¶ And eueryche of these ryotourys ran 768  
 Til they come to that tre & there they founde  
 Of floreyngys fyne of gold I-coynede rounde  
 Wel nygh an viij buschellis as hem thouzte  
 No lengere thanne aftyr deth they souzte 772  
 But eche of hem so glad was of the syght  
 ffor that floreyngys been so fayre & bryzt  
 That doun they sette hem by this precious hord  
 The werste of hem spak the ferste word 776



Bretheryn quod he thyng what I seye  
 Myn wit is greet thow that I borde & pleye  
 This tresore hath fortune vn-to vs 3euyne  
 In myrthe & Iolyte oure lyf to leuyn 780  
 And lyghtely as it comyth so wele we spende  
 Ey godys precyous dignetee ho wende  
 To day that we schuldyn han so fayr grace  
 But myghte this gold been caryed from this place 784  
 Hom to myn hous or ellys vn-to 3ourys  
 ffor weel 3e wot that al this gold is ourys  
 Thanne were we in high felicite [leaf 310, back]  
 But treweli by day it may nat be 788  
 Men woldyn seyn that we were thevis stronge  
 And for oure owene tresore doon vs honge  
 This tresore muste Icaryede been by nyght  
 As wysely & as slyly as men myght 792  
 Therefore I rede that cut a-mong vs alle  
 Be drawe & lat se where the cut wele falle  
 And he that hat the cut with herte blythe  
 Schal renne to touzne & that ful swythe 796  
 And brynge vs breed & wyn pryuyly  
 And two of vs schal kepen subtyly  
 This tresor wel / if he wele nat tarye  
 Whan it is nyght we wele this tresore carye 800  
 By on assent / where as vs thynkyth best  
 That on of hem the Cut brouzte in his fest  
 And bad hem drawe & loke wheere it wolde falle  
 And it fel on the 3ongest of hem alle 804  
 And forth toward the toun he wente a-non  
 And al so soone as pat he was goon  
 That oon of hem spak on-to that othyr  
 Thow knowyst weel thow art myn swore brothir 808  
 Thyn profyt wele I telle the a-noon  
 Thow wist weel that oure falawe is goon  
 And heere is gold & that ful greet plentee  
 That schal departid be a-mong vs three 812

But natheles If I can speke it so  
 That it departyd were a-mong vs two  
 Hadde I nat doon a frendys turn to thee  
 That othir answerde I not how that may bee 816  
 He wot that the gold is with vs tweye  
 What schal we do what schal we to hym seye  
 Schal it be conseyll seyde the ferste schrewe  
 And I schal tellyn in a wordys fewe 820  
 What we schal doon & brynge it weel a-boute  
 I graunte quod that othyr out of doute  
 That by myn trouthe I wele the nat by-wrye  
 Now quod he thow wost weel that we ben twye 824  
 And two of vs schal strengere been than oon [leaf 311]  
 Loke whan he is set that ryzt a-noon  
 Arys as thow woldys with hym pleye  
 And I schal ryue hym thour the sydys tweye 828  
 Whil that thow strogelyst with hym as in game  
 And with thyn daggere loke thow do the same  
 And thanne schal al this gold departid be  
 Myn deere frend be-twixe me & the 832  
 Thanne may we bothe oure lustis al fulfyllen  
 And pleye at the deis ryzt at oure owene wille  
 And thus acordede been these schrewys tweye  
 To sleen the thredde as 3e han herd me seye 836  
 ¶ This 3ongeste wyght that wente to the toun  
 ful ofte in hese<sup>1</sup> herte he rollede vp & down [1 se corrected]  
 The beute of the floreyneys newe & brighte  
 O lord quod he If so were that I myzte 840  
 Haue al thes tresor to myn self a-lone  
 There is no man that lyuyth vndyr the trone  
 Of good that schulde liue so merye as I  
 And at the laste the fend oure enemy 844  
 Put in his herte / that he schulde poysounne <sup>2</sup>beye<sup>2</sup> [2—3 corr.]  
 With whiche he myghte sleen hise felawis tweye  
 ffor why the fend fond hym in swich lyuyng  
 That he hadde leue hem to sorwe brynge 848

This was vttyrly his entente  
 To slen hem bothe & neuere to repente  
 And forth he goth no lengere wolde he tarye  
 In-to the toun vn-to a potecarye 852  
 And preyede hym that he hym wolde selle  
 Sum poysoun that he myzte hise rattis quelle  
 And eek there was a polkat in his hawe  
 That as he seyde his capounnys hadde he slawe 856  
 And fayn he wolde wreke hym ȝif he myzte  
 On vermyn that destroyede hym be nyghte  
 ¶ The potecarye answerde & thow schalt haue  
 A thyng that also god myn soule saue 860  
 In al this world there is no creature  
 That etyn or drynk of this confytur<sup>1</sup> [1 y corrected]  
 Nat but the moutenaunce of a corn of wheete [leaf 311, back]  
 That he schal his lyf a-noon for-leete 864  
 Ya sterue he schal and that in lasse while  
 Than thow wylt gon a pas nat but a myle  
 The poysoun is so strong & violent  
 ¶ This cursede man hath in his hond I-hent 868  
 The poysoun in a box & sythe he ran  
 In-to the nexte streete vn-to a man  
 And borwede hym large botellys tre  
 And in the two his pousoun pourede he 872  
 The thredde he kepte clene for his drynk  
 ffor al the nygh[t] he schop hym for to swynk  
 In caryinge of that gold out of that place  
 And whan this ryotour with sory grace 876  
 Hadde fylled wyth wyn hise greete botellis thre  
 To hise felas a-geyn repayrede hee  
 ¶ What neede of it to sarmone moore  
 ffor ryȝt as they hadde cast his deth byfore 880  
 Rygh[t] so they han hym slayn & that a-noon  
 And whan this was doon thus spak that oon  
 Now lat vs sitte & drynke & make vs merye  
 And aftyr that we wele his body berye 884

And with that word it happede hym percas  
 To take the botel there the poysoun was  
 And drank & ȝaf his felawe d[r]ynke also  
 ffor whiche a-noon they storve bothe two 888  
 ¶ But certys I suppose that Aucion  
 Wrot neuere in no canoun ne in no feñ  
 Mo wondere sygnys of enpoysounnyng  
 Than hadde these wrechis two er hire endyng 892  
 Thus endede been these homycidis two  
 And ek the false enpoysonere also  
 ¶ O cursede synne of alle cursedenesse  
 O traytourys homycyde / o wikkedenesse 896  
 O glotonye / luxurye / & hasarderye  
 Thow blasphemere of cryst with vilonye  
 And othis greete of vsage & of pryde  
 Allas mankynde how may it betyde 900  
 That to thyn creatour whiche that the wrough [leaf 312]  
 And with hise precious blood the bough  
 Thow art so fals & so vnkynde allas  
 Now goode men god for-ȝeue ȝow ȝoure trespas 904  
 And ware ȝow from the synne of aueryce  
 Myn holy pardoun may ȝow alle waryce  
 So that ȝe offere / noblis or starlyngis  
 Or ellys syluyr sponys brochis ryngis 908  
 Bowith ȝoure heed vndyr this holy bulle  
 Comyth vp ȝe wyuys offerith of ȝoure wolle  
 ȝoure name I entere here in myn rolle a-non  
 In-to the blysse of heuene schul ȝe gon 912  
 I ȝow assoyle by myn heye power  
 Yow that wele offere as clene & eek as cleer  
 As ȝe weryn born & lo seris thus I preche  
 And Ihesu cryst that is oure soulys leche 916  
 So graunte ȝow his pardoun to resceyue  
 ffor that is best I wele ȝou nat disceyue  
 But seris on word forȝat I in myn tale  
 I haue relikyz & pardoun in myn male 920

As fayre as ony man in yngeland  
 Whiche were me 3ouyn by the popis hand  
 3yf ony of yow wele of deuocyoun  
 Offeryn & han myn absolucioun 924  
 Comyth forth anon & knelyth here a-doun  
 And mekely resseyuyth myn pardoun  
 Or ellis takyth pardoun as 3e weende  
 Al newe & frosch at euery mylys ende 928  
 So that 3e offere alwey newe & newe  
 Nobelis & penys whiche that been goode & trewe  
 It is an honour to eueriche that is here  
 That ye mowen haue a suffycient pardonere 932  
 To a-soyle 3ow in cuntre as 3e ryde  
 ffor auenture whiche that may be-tyde  
 Perauenture there may falle on or two  
 Doun of his hors & breke his nekke a two 936  
 Loke which a seurete it is to 3ow alle  
 That I am in 3oure felaueschepe I-falle  
 That may assoyle 3ow bothe more & lasse [leaf 312, back]  
 Whan that the soule schal from the body passe 940  
 I rede that oure ost here schal begynne  
 ffor he is most enuolupid in sygne  
 Come forth sere ost & offere here a-non  
 And thow schat kysse myne relykys euerychoon 944  
 Ye for a groote vnbokele a-noon thyn pors  
 Nay nay quodd<sup>1</sup> he / thanne haue I crystis curs [1 a later?]  
 Lat be quod he it schal nat be so theech  
 Thow woldyst make me to kysse thy<sup>n</sup>no olde brech 948  
 And swere it weere a relike of a seynt  
 They it were with tyn fundement depeynt  
 But by the cros that seynt elyne fond  
 I wolde I hadde thyne colyounnys in myn hond 952  
 In stede of relikys or of seyntewarye  
 Let kutte hem of I wele from the hem carye  
 They schul been schrynyd in an hoggis tord  
 This pardouner answerde nat a word 956



So wroth he was he wolde no word seye	
Now quod oure ost I wele no lengere pleye	
With the ne with noon othyr angery man	
But rygh a-noon the worthy knygh be-gan	960
Whan that he saw that al the peple lough	
Na moore of this for it is ryght I-nough	
Sire pardoneer be merie & glad of cheere	
And sere ost that been to me so deere	964
I preye 3ow that 3e kysse the pardounneer	
And pardounner I preye the drawe the neer	
And as we dede lat vs laughe & pleye	
Anon they kyste & rede forth here weye	968

Here endith the pardonneris<sup>1</sup> tale

[<sup>1</sup> ? second n]

## GROUP B. (β. FRAGMENT III.)

### § 4. THE SHIPMAN'S TALE.

[& begynneth þe tale

[Sloane MS 1685, leaf 192.]

**A** Marchaunt whilom dwellyd at seynt denys  
 þat riche was for which men helde hym wys  
 A wyfe he hade of' excellent' beaute  
 And compenable and reuerent' was she  
 Whiche ys a thyng þat causeth more dispense  
 þan worthe ys alle þe chere and reuerence 1196  
 þat men hem done at festees and at daunces  
 Suche salutacions and contenaunces  
 Passeth as doth þe shadowe vpon a walle  
 But' woo ys hym þat payen mot for alle 1200  
 þe cely husbonde algate he mot paie  
 he mote vs clothe and vs arraie  
 Alle for his owne worship rychely  
 In whiche arraie we dauncen Iolilye 1204  
 And yf' þat he may not' parauenture  
 Or elles luste none suche espense to endure  
 But thynkith þat it is waste and y-loste  
 þan mote a-nopere paien for oure coste 1208  
 Or lene vs golde & þat' ys perilous  
 This noble Marchaunt hylde a noble house  
 ffor wwhiche he hade alday grete repaire  
 ffor hys largesse and for hys wyf was faire 1212  
 þat wonder ys but herkeneth to my tale  
 Amonges alle hys gestes grete & smale  
 þere was a monke a faire man & a bolde  
 I trowe .xx. wynter he was olde 1216  
 þat euere in on was drawynge to þat place  
 þis yonge Monke þat was so faire of face

A-queynted was so with þat gode man [Sloane MS 1685]  
 [ . . . . . 1220  
 . . . . .  
 . . . . .  
*no gap in the Sloane MS, in Harl. 1758, or Reg. 18 C ii.]*  
 And eke þis Monke of whiche I began 1224  
 Were bothe two borne in oo vilage  
 þe Monke hym cleymed as for cosynage  
 And he a-eyne saith not onys nay  
 But was as glade as any foule of day 1228  
 ffor in his hert it was a grete plesaunce  
 Thus bene þe knyht with eterne aliaunce  
 Of Bretherheed/ whiles þat her lyf may dure  
 And ilke of hem gan opere assure 1232  
 ffre was dan Iohn and namly of dispense  
 As in þat hous and fulle of diligence  
 To do plesaunce and also grete costage  
 he nouȝt for-yate to ȝeue þe laste page 1236  
 In alle þat hous but after hir degre  
 he ȝave þe lord / and sipens his meyne  
 whan þat he came some manere honest thyng  
 ffor whiche þei were as glade for hys comynge 1240  
 As foule ys fayne whan þe sonne vp rysethe  
 Nomore here-of as nowe for þis sufficethe  
 But so befelle þis Marchaunt on a day  
 Schope hym to make redy hys array 1244  
 Toward þe town of Bruggeys for to fare  
 To byen þere a porcion of ware  
 ffor whiche he hathe to parys / sent anone  
 A messangere and prayed hathe Dan Iohn 1248  
 þat he shulde come to seynt Denys to pleye  
 with hym and with his wyf a day or tweye  
 Or he to bruggeys went in alle wyse  
 This noble Monke of whiche I you deuysel [Sloane extract  
 ends]  
 Hath of his abbot as hym leste lycence [Camb. MS, leaf 314]  
 By-cause he was a man of hygh prudence

And ek an offycer out for to ryde  
 To seen here granges & here bernys wyde 1256  
 And vn-to seynt Denys he comyth a-noon  
 Who was so wolcome as myn lord daun Iohn  
 Oure deere cosyn ful of curteysye  
 With hym he brouzte a Iubbe of Maluesye 1260  
 And ek a nothir ful of fyn vernage  
 And volatyl as was his vsage  
 And thus I lete hem drynke & ete & pleye  
 This Marchaunt & this Monk a day or tweye 1264  
 The thredde day this Marchaunt vp a-ryseth  
 And on hise nedis sadly hym auyseth  
 And vp in-to his countour house goth he  
 To rekene with hym self weel may be 1268  
 Of thilke 3eer how that it with hym stod  
 And how that he dispendit hadde his good  
 And 3if that he encresede were er non  
 Hise bokis & hise baggis manyon 1272  
 He leyth be-forn hym on his county[n]g bord  
 fful ryche was his tresor & his hord  
 ffor which ful faste his countour dore he schette  
 And ek he nolde that no man schulde hym lette 1276  
 Of hise acountis for the mene tyme  
 And thus he syt<sup>1</sup> tyl it was passid pryme [1 altered]  
 ¶ Daun Iohn was rysyn in the morwe also  
 And in the gardyn walkith to & fro 1280  
 And hath hise thyngis seyd ful curteysly  
 This goode wyf cam walkynge pryuyly  
 In-to the gardyn there as he walkyth softe  
 And hym saluyth as he hath doon ofte 1284  
 A maydechild cam in hyre cumpaynye  
 Whiche as hyre lyste sche may gouerne & gye  
 ffor 3it vndyr the 3erde was the mayde  
 ¶ O deere Cosyn myn daun Iohn sche sayde 1288  
 What alyth 3ow so rathe for to ryse  
 Nece quod he it oghte I-nogh suffyse

ffyue hourys for to slepe vp-on a nyght [leaf 314, back]  
 But it were for an old appollyd wyght 1292  
 As been these weddede men that lye & dare  
 As in a forme sit a very hare  
 Were al for-strauzt with houndys greet & smale  
 But dere nece why be 3e so pale 1296  
 I trowe certis that 3oure goode man  
 Hath 3ow laboured sythe the nyght be-gan  
 That 3ow were nede to restyn hastily  
 And with that word he lough ful meryely 1300  
 And of his owene thouzt he wex al red  
 This fayre wyf gan for to schake hire heed  
 And seyde thus 3a god wot al quod she  
 [Nay cosyn myne hit stont not so *with* me [Sloane MS 1085,  
 ffor by þat god þat yave me soule & lyf leaf 193, back]  
 In alle þe reme of fraunce ys þere no wyf  
 þat lasse luste hathe to þat sorie playe  
 ffor I may syngen alas and weel awaye 1308  
 þat I was borne but to no wízt quod she] [Sloane extract ends]  
 Dare I nat telle how that it stant with me [Cambr. MS]  
 Wherefore I thyнке out of this world to wende (no gap above)  
 Or ellis of myn self to make an ende 1312  
 So ful am I of drede & of care /  
 This Monk be-gan vp-on this wif to stare  
 And seyde allas myn nece god for-beede  
 That 3e for ony sorwe or ony drede 1316  
 ffor-do 3oure self but tellyth me 3oure greef  
 Paraurenture I may in 3oure myschif  
 Conseyle or helpe / & therfore tellyth mee  
 Alle 3oure a-noy for it schal be secree 1320  
 ffor on myn portoes here I make an oth  
 That neuere in myn lyue for lef ne loth  
 Ne schal I of no conseyll 3ow be-wreye  
 The same a-geyn to 3ow quod sche I seye 1324  
 By god & by this portos I 3ow swere  
 Thow men woldyn me al in-to pecis tere



Ne schal I neuere for to goon to helle  
 Be-wreȝe a word of thyng that ȝe me telle 1328  
 Noght for no Cosynage ne allyaunce  
 But verrayly for loue & affyaunce  
 Thus been th[e]y swore & here vp-on they keste  
 And eche of hem told othir what hem leste 1332  
 Cosyn quod sche ȝif that I hadde a space  
 As I haue non & namely in this place  
 Thanne wolde I telle a legende of myn lyf [leaf 315]  
 What I haue suffered sithe that I was a wyf 1336  
 With myn<sup>1</sup> husbonde al be he youre cosyn [ altered]  
 Nay quod this monk by god & seynt martyn  
 He nys no moore Cosyn vpon to me  
 Than is the lef that hangyth on the tre 1340  
 I clepe hym so by seynt denys of fraunce  
 To han the moore cause of acqueyntaunce  
 Of ȝow whiche I haue louyd specyally  
 A-bouyn alle women sikyrly 1344  
 This swere I ȝow on myn perfeccioun  
 Tellyth ȝoure gref lest that he come a doun  
 And hastyth ȝow & goth a-wey a-non  
 Myn deere loue quod sche o myn daun Iohn 1348  
 fful leef were me this conseyll for to hyde  
 But out it<sup>1</sup> mot it may no moore a-byde  
 ¶ Myn husbonde is to me the worste man  
 That euere was sithe the world be-gan 1352  
 But sithe I am a wyf it sit nat me  
 To telle no wigh of oure pryuyte  
 Neythir a bedde ne in non othyr place  
 God schilde I schulde it telle for his grace 1356  
 A wyf ne schal nat seyn of hyre housbonde  
 But al honour as I can vndyrstonde  
 Saue on to ȝow thus tellyn I schal  
 As helpe me god he nys nat worth an al 1360  
 In no degre the valeu of a flye  
 But ȝit me greuyth that most his negarderye

And weel 3e wot that wemen naturelly  
 Desyryn thyngis gaye<sup>1</sup> as wel as I [<sup>1</sup> altered] 1364  
 They wolde that here husbondys schulde bee  
 Hardy . & ryche & wys & therto free  
 And buxsom vnto his wyf & frosch a-bedde  
 But by that ilke lord that for vs bledde 1368  
 ffor his honour mynself for to araye  
 A sunday next I mot nedys paye  
 An hunderede frankis or ellys am I lorn  
 3it weere me leuere that I weere on born 1372  
 Than me were don a slaundere or velanye [leaf 315, back]  
 And 3if myn husbonde ek myghte it espye  
 I nere but lost & therefore I 3ow preye  
 Lene me this summe or ellys mote I deye 1376  
 Daun Ion I seye lene me these hunderede frankys  
 Parde I wele nat fayle yow myn thankys  
 If that yow lyste to don that I 3ow praye  
 ffor at a certeyn day I wele 3ow paye 1380  
 And don to 3ow that plesaunce & seruyse  
 That I may don ryght as 3ow leste deuynse  
 And but I do god take on me vengeaunce  
 As foul as hadde Genyloun of fraunce 1384  
 ¶ This gentil Monk answerde in this manere  
 Now trewely myn owene lady dere  
 I haue quod he on 3ow so greet routhe  
 That I 3ow swere & plyzte 3ow myn trouthe 1388  
 That whan youre husbonde is to flaunderys fare  
 I wele delyuere yow out of this care  
 ffor I wele brynge 3ow an hunderede frankys  
 And with that word he caughte hire by the flankys 1392  
 And hire enbrasith harde & kyste hire ofte  
 Goth now 3oure wey quod he al styлле & softe  
 And lat vs dyne as sone as euere he may  
 ffor by myn Chylendere it is pryme of day 1396  
 Goth now & beth as trewe as I schal be  
 Now ellys god forbeede sire quod sche

And forth sche goth as Ioly as a pye  
 And bad the Cokys that they schulde hem hye 1400  
 So that men myghte dyne and that a-non  
 Vp to this husbonde is this wyf a-gon  
 And knokkyth at his countour boldely  
 Who there quod he / petyr it am I 1404  
 Quod sche what sere how longe wele 3e faste  
 How long tyme wele 3e / rekene & caste  
 Youre summys & youre bokys & 3oure thyngis  
 The deuyll haue part of alle sweche rekenyngis 1408  
 Ye haue I-now *parde* of godys sonde  
 Come doun to day & lat 3oure baggis stonde  
 Ne be 3e nat aschamyd that daun Iohn [leaf 316]  
 Schal fastynge al this day alenge goon 1412  
 What lat vs heere a masse & go we dyne  
 Wyf quod this man lytyl canst thow deuyne  
 The Curyouse besynesse that we haue  
 ffor of vs Chapmen al so god me saue 1416  
 And by that lord that clepid is seynt Yue  
 Skarsely a-mongis twelve ten schul thryue  
 Contynewelly lastynge vn-to oure age  
 We may wel make cher & good visage 1420  
 And dryue forth the world as it may be  
 And kepyn oure estat in pryuytee  
 Tyl we been ded or ellis that we pleye  
 A pylgrymage or goon out of the weye 1424  
 And therefore haue I greet necessite  
 Vp-on this queynte world tauyse me  
 ffor euere mo we mote stonde in drede  
 Of hap & fortune in oure Chapmanhede 1428  
 To flanderis wele I go to morwe at day  
 And come a-geyn as sone as euere I may  
 ffor whiche myn deere wyf I the beseke  
 As beth to to euery whit buxsom & meke 1432  
 And for to keepe oure good been curyous  
 And honestely gouerne weel oure hous

Thow hast I-nough in euery maner wyse  
 That to a thryfty household may suffyse 1436  
 The lakkyth non aray ne non vitayle  
 Of syluyr in thyn purs schalt thow non fayle  
 And with that word his countour dore he schette  
 And down he goth no lengere wolde he lette 1440  
 And hastily a masse was there seyd  
 And spedyly the tabelys weere I-leyd  
 And to the dyner faste hem spedde  
 And rychely this Monk the Chapman fedde 1444  
 At aftyr dyner daun Iohn sobyrly  
 This Chapman tok apart & pryuyly  
 He seyde hym thus / Cosyn it standyth so  
 That wel I se to Bruggis wele Iego 1448  
 God & seynt Augustyn speede 3ow & gyde [leaf 316, back]  
 I preye 3ow cosyn wysely that 3e ryde  
 Gouernyth 3ow also of 3oure dyete  
 Attemprely & namely in this heete 1452  
 By-twixe vs two nedyth ne straunge fare  
 ffare weel cosyn god schylde 3ow from care  
 And 3if that ony by day or by nyght  
 If it lye in myn power & myn myght 1456  
 That 3e me wele<sup>1</sup> comaunde in ony wyse [1 later]  
 It schal be don ryght as 3e wele deuyse  
 othyng Or that 3e go If it may be  
 I wolde preye 3ow for to lene me 1460  
 An hunderede frankys for a wyke or tweye  
 ffor serteyn bestes that I muste beye  
 To store with a place & that is oures  
 God helpe me so I wolde it were 3ourys 1464  
 I schal not fayle surely of myn day  
 Nat for a thousent frankys a myle way  
 But lat this thyng been secre I 3ow prey  
 ffor 3it to nygh[t] these bestis mot I beye 1468  
 And fare now weel myn owene cosyn deere  
 Graunt mercy of 3oure cost & of 3oure goodely chere

This noble Marchaunt gently a-non  
 Answerede & seyde o cosyn myn daun Ioĥn 1472  
 Now sekyrly this is a smal requeste  
 Myn gold is 3ourys whan that it 3ow leste  
 And not only myn gold but myn chafare  
 Taake what 3ow lyste god schilde that 3e spare 1476  
 But o thyng is 3e knowe it wel I-now  
 Of chapmen that here monye is here plogĥ  
 We may encrece whil we han a name  
 But goldeles for to been it is a schame 1480  
 Payeth it a-geyn whan it lyth in 3oure ese  
 Aftyr myn myth ful fayn I wolde 3ow plese  
 These hunderede frankys he fette forth a-noon  
 And pryuyly he tok hem to daun Ioĥn 1484  
 No whyt of al this world wyste of this lone  
 Sauynge this marchaunt & daun Ioĥn a-lone  
 They drynke & speke & rome a whyle & pleye [leaf 317]  
 Tyl that daun Ioĥn rydyth to his abbey 1488  
 The morwe cam & forth this marchaunt ridith  
 To fflaunderis ward his prentys weel hym gydith  
 Tyl he cam in-to Bruggis myriely  
 Now goth this Marchaunt faste & busyly 1492  
 Aboute his neede & byeth & creaunceth  
 He neythir pleyeth at deis ne daunceth  
 But as a marchaunt schortely for to telle  
 He lat his lyf & there I lete hym dwelle 1496  
 The soneday next the marchaunt was a-goon  
 To seynt Denys is come daun Ioĥn  
 With croune & berd al frosch & newe schauē  
 In al the hous ne was so lyte a knawe 1500  
 Ne no whit ellys that he nas ful fayn  
 That myn lord daun Ioĥn was come a-gayn  
 And schortely to the poynt rygh[t] for to goon  
 This fayre wyf a-cordyt with daun Ioĥn 1504  
 That for hise hunderede frankys he schulde al nyght  
 Haue hyre in hise armys bolt vp ry3t



And this acord parforned was in deede  
 In myrthe al nyght a busy lyf they leede 1508  
 Til it was day that daun Iohn wente his way  
 And bad the meyne fare wel haue good day  
 ffor non of hem ne no wyght in the toun  
 Hath of daun Iohn rygh non suspecyoun 1512  
 And forth he rydyth hom to his abbey  
 Or wheree hym luste no more of hym I seye  
 ¶ This Marchaunt whan that endit was the fayre  
 To seynt Denys he gan for to rapayre 1516  
 And with his wyf he makyth feste & chieere  
 And tellyth hyre that chaffare is so deere  
 That nedys muste he make a cheyuyssance  
 ffor he was boundyn in a reconyssance 1520  
 To payen twenty thousent sheeld a-non  
 ffor with this marchaunt is to parys goo  
 To borwe of certeyn frendys that he hadde  
 A certeyn frankys & some with hym he ladde 1524  
 ¶ And whan that he was come in to the toun [leaf 317, back]  
 ffor gret chierete & greet facoun  
 Vn-too daun Iohn he fyrst goth hym to pleye  
 Nat for to axe or borwe of hym monye 1528  
 But for to wete & se of his weel fare  
 And for to tellyn hym of hys chaffare  
 As frendys doon whan they been met in feere  
 Daun Iohn hym makyth feste & myry chieere 1532  
 And hym tolde a-geyn ful specially  
 How he hadde weel I-bouyt & graciously  
 Thankede be god al hol his marchaundyse  
 Saue that he wolde in alle wyse 1536  
 Makyn a cheuyciaunce as for hise beste  
 And thanne he schulde ben In Ioye & reste  
 ¶ Daun Iohn answerede sertis I am fayn  
 That ȝe in heele are comyn hom a-gayn 1540  
 And ȝif that I were ryche as I haue blys  
 Of twenty thousant sheld schulde ȝe nat mys

ffor 3e so kyndely this othir day  
 Lente me gold & as I can & may 1544  
 I-thankedede be god & by seynt Iame  
 But natheles I tok vn-to oure dame  
 3oure wyf at hom the same gold agayn  
 Vp-on 3oure benche sche wot it wel certeyn 1548  
 By certeyn tokenys that I can 3ow telle  
 Now by 3oure leue I may no lengere dwelle  
 Oure abbot wole out of this toun a-noon  
 And in his cumpaynye mote I goo 1552  
 Grete weel oure dame myn owene nece sweete  
 And fare wel deere cosyn tyl we meete  
 ¶ This marchaut which that was ful war & wys  
 Creanced hath & payed ek in parys 1556  
 To certeyn lumbardys redy in here hond  
 The summe of gold & gat of hem his bond  
 And hom he goth myrye as a popyniay  
 ffor weele he knew he stood In swich aray 1560  
 That nedys mote he wynne in that vyage  
 A thousent frankys a-bouyn al his Costage  
 [Hys wyf fulle redy mette hym at þe 3aate [Sloane MS 1685,  
 leaf 197]  
 And she was wonte of olde vsage algate 1564  
 And alle þat nyȝt in myrthe þei be sette  
 ffor he was ryche and clerely oute of dette  
 Whan it was day þis Marchaunt gan enbrace  
 Hys wyf alle newe and kyssed here in þe face 1568  
 And pp he gothe and makethe hit wonder towre  
 No more quod she be god ye haue ynouȝe  
 And wantonly with hym agayne she playde  
 Tylle at þe laste þis Marchaunt sayde 1572  
 By god quod he I am a lytelle wrothe  
 With you my wyfe alle þouȝe yt be me lothe  
 And woote 3e why by god as þat I gesse  
 ffor ye haue made a manere of straungenesse 1576  
 Be-twexte me and my Cosyn Daun Iohn  
 3e shulde haue warned me or I hade gooñ.

þat he hade you an hundred frankes payde [Sloane MS 1685]  
 Be redy token · and he helde hym euel y-payde 1580  
 ffor þat I to hym spake of Cheuesaunce  
 Me semyd so as by hys contenaunce  
 But nathelees be god þat ys heuen kynge  
 I þouȝte nouȝt to axe of hym no thyng 1584  
 I pray þe wyf ne do no more soo.  
 Telle me alle way or þat I fro þe goo  
 ȝeue eny detoure hathe in myn absence  
 I-payede þe laste þorouȝ þi necligence [leaf 197, back]  
 I myȝt hym axe as thyng þat he hade payde  
 Thys wyf was not aferde nor afrayde  
 But boldely she sayd and þat a-none  
 Mare I defye þat false Monke Daūn Iolin 1592  
 I kepe not of hys tokens neuere a dele  
 He toke me certayne golde I woote hit wele  
 What euel þedom of hys monke snowet  
 ffor god it woote I wende withoute doute 1596  
 þat he hade yeue it me be cause of you  
 To done þere-with myne honoure & my prowē  
 ffor cosynage and eke for beel chere  
 þat he hath hade full ofte tyme here 1600  
 But siȝen I see I stonde in suche disioynt  
 I wylle answeere you shortly to þe poynt  
 ȝe haue mo slacker' dettours þan am I  
 ffor I wille pay you wele and redely 1604  
 ffro day to day and if so be þat I fayle  
 I am youre wyf score it on my tayle  
 And I shalle pay as sone as euere I may  
 ffor be myn trouȝe I haue on myn array 1608  
 And not in waste bestowed euery dele  
 And for I haue bestoyed it so wele  
 To youre honour' for goddes sake y say  
 As be not wrothe bot let vs jape & play 1612  
 ȝe shalle my Ioly body haue to wedde  
 Be god I nelle not pay you but a bed

ffor-yeue yt me myn owen spouse dere	[Sloane MS 1685]
Turne hyderward and make me better chere	1616
Thys Marchaunt sawe þere was no remedy	
And forto chyde it nere but foly	
Seþen hit may not amendid be	
And wyfe he sayde I forzeue it þe	1620
But by þi lyf be no more so large.	
Kepe better my gode þis zeue I þe in charge	
Thus endeth nowe my tale and god vs sende	
Talynge ynouze vnto our lyfes ende // Amen	[leaf 198]

Here endeth þe tale of þe Shipman

Here begynneth þe Prolooge of þe Pryoresse [Sloane MS 1685,  
leaf 198]

**W**Ele y-sayde be corpus *Dominus quod* oure hoost  
 Nowe longe mote ye sayle be see cooste  
 Sir gentil mayster gentil marynere  
 God yeue þe Monke a þousand laste of quad 3eere 1628  
 A ha felaw be ware of suche a jape  
 The Monke putte in þe mannes hooðe an ape  
 And yn hys wyfes eke by seynt Dunstyñ  
 Droweth noñ monkes to your' ynne 1632  
 But nowe passe ouere and let vs seke aboute  
 Who shalle nowe telle of alle þis route  
 An opere tale and with þat worde he sayde  
 As curteysely as hit' hade bene a Mayde 1636  
 My lady Pryoresse *with* our' leue  
 So þat I you not wille to greue  
 I wolde deme þat ye telle shulde  
 A tale nexte yf so be þat ye wolde 1640  
 Nowe wolle 3e vowchesafe my lady dere  
 Gladly *quod* she and sayde as ye shaft here

Here endeth þe Prolooge and begynneth þe tale



[No breaks between the stanzas in Sloane, Cambr. or Harl. MS.]

[The Prologue.]

O lord oure lord þi nane so marvelous [Sloane MS 1685]  
 ys in þis worlde y-sprad quod she  
 ffor not only þi laude precious  
 performed ys by men of dignyte 1646  
 But be þe mouthe of Children þi bownte  
 Perfourmed ys for in oure brest soukyng  
 Some tyme shewen þei þine heryng 1649

Wherefore in lawde as I can beste & may  
 Of the þat and of þe þat holy floure  
 [ . . . . . no gap in the MS.]  
 To tellen a storie I wol do my labour 1653  
 Not þat I may encrece hir honoure  
 ffor she hir self ys honoure & þerto roote  
 Of bounte next hir sone of saules bote 1656

[ . . . . . no gap in the MS.]  
 O. bussþi vnbrent brennyng in Moses sight  
 But rauysshed down fro þe dignete [leaf 198, back]  
 Thorouze þine humblenesse þe goste þat in þe lyzt 1660  
 Of whos vertu whan he in þine hert lyzt  
 Conceyued was þe fadres sapience  
 helpe me to telle yt in þine reuerence 1663

¶ Lady þi bounte and þi magnificence  
 Thy vertu and thy grete humilite  
 There may no þinge expresse in no sentence  
 ffor som tyme lady or men pray to þe 1667  
 þou geste be-fore of þi benygnyte  
 And geteste vs þe lyzt/ þorouze þi prayere  
 To leden vs vnto þi soþe so clere 1670

Ly comynge ys to weyke O. blysfuþ quene [Sloane MS 1685.]  
 fforto declare þi grete worthynesse  
 þat I ne may þe wyȝt not sustene  
 But as a chylde of twelfe moneth of age or lesse 1674  
 þat can vnneth eny worde expresse  
 ffor so fare I and þefore I you pray  
 Cydeth my songe þat I shalle to you say 1677

## [THE TALE.]

There was a Chylde in a grete cite  
 Amonge crysten folke in þe Iewrye  
 Susteyned by a lord of þat countre  
 ffor foule vsurye and lucre of vlanye 1681  
 þat felle to Cryste and to hys companye  
 And þorouȝe þe streete men myȝt ryde & wende  
 ffor hyt was fre and open at eyþere ende 1684

Plyte scoole of crysten folke þere stooðe  
 Doun atte fyrthere ende in whiche þere were  
 Chyldren an heepe comen of crysten bloode  
 þat lerned in þat scole yere by ȝeere 1688  
 Suche manere doctryne as men vsyd þere  
 Thys ys to say to synge and to rede  
 As smale Chyldren do in hir Chylde-heede 1691

Amonge þese children was a wydowe sone  
 A lytel Clerygion seuen yeere of age  
 þat day by day to scole was hys wone  
 And also eke where as he saw þe ymage [leaf 199] 1695  
 Of crystes modere hade he in vsage  
 As hym was tauȝte to knele a-doun & say  
 hys Aue marie as he goth by þe way 1698

Thus hathe þis wydowe hir litel Child tauȝt [Sloane MS 1685.]

Oure blysfuH lady Crystes modir dere

To worshiþe ay and he for-yate hit nouȝt

ffor sely Chylde wyлле al day sone lere 1702

But ay when I remembre me of þis matere

Seynt Nicholace stonte euere in my presence

ffor he so yonge to Crist dyd reuerence 1705

Thys Child his lytel booke lernynge

As he sat in þe scole at hys primere

he alma redemptoris mater herd synge

As Children lernyd hir antephonere 1709

As · as he durste he drowe hym nere & nere

And herkened ay þe wordes & þe noote

Tylle he þe fyrste verse coude by roote 1712

Not what þat latyne was to seye

ffor he so yonge and tendre was of age

But on a day hys felawe he gan preye

To expoune hym þis songe in hys langeage 1716

Or tellen hym why þis songe was in vsage

Thus prayde him to construe and declare

ffulle ofte tymes . on his knees bare 1719

Hys felawe whiche was eldere þan he

Answeryd hym þus . þis songe I herde seye

was made of oure blesfulle lady fre

here to salowe and eke hir to preye 1723

To bene oure helpe and our' socour' whan we deye

I can no more expone in þis matere

I lerne songe I can but lytel gramere 1726

And ys þis songe made in reuerence

Of crystes moder sayd þis Innocent

Now certes I wyлле do my diligent

To konne þis or crystemasse be went 1730

Thouȝe I for my prymer shalle be shent [Sloane MS 1685, ff 190, bk]  
 And to be beten pryse on an oure  
 I wolle yt konne oure lady to honoure 1733

Hys felawe tauȝte hym hamward pryuely  
 ffro day to day til he coude yt by roote  
 And þan he songe it wele and boldely  
 ffro worde to worde accordynge *with* þe note 1737  
 Thrys on a day it passed þorouȝe hys þrote  
 To scoleward and hamward whan he went  
 On Crystes modir sett was hys entente 1740

¶ As I haue sayd þorouȝe oute þe Iewrie  
 Thys Chylde as he came to & fro  
 ffulle merely þan wolde he synge & crye  
 O alma redemptoris mater euere mo 1744  
 The swetnesse hath hys hert percid so  
 Of Crystes moder þat to hir to praye  
 he can not stynte of syngynge by þe weie] [Sloane extract ends.]

Oure fyrste fo the serpent satirnas [Camb. MS, leaf 521]  
 That hath in Ieues herte his waspis nest  
 Vp swal & seyde O ebraik peple allas  
 Is this to yow a thyng that is honest 1751  
 That swich a boy schal walkyn as hym lest  
 In ȝoure despyt & syngyn of swich sentence  
 Which is a-ȝens oure lawys reuerence 1754

ffrom thenys forth the Iewys han conspyred  
 This innocent out of this world to chace  
 An homycyde thereto han they heryd  
 Rygh in an aley at a pryue place 1758  
 And as the child gan forth by-for to pace  
 This cursede Iew hym hente & held hym faste  
 And kitte his throte & in a pit hym caste 1761

I seye that in a warderope they hym threwe  
 Where as these Iewys purgyn here entrayle  
 O cursed folk of herodes al newe  
 What may ȝoure euele entent ȝow a-vayle 1765  
 Mordere wele out certeyn it wele nat fayle  
 And namely there as thonour of god schal sprede  
 The blod out cryeth on ȝoure cursed dede 1768

O martyr soudede to virginite  
 Now mayst tow syngyn folwyng eue in on  
 The whyte lamb celestial quod sche  
 Of whiche the greete euangelyst seynt Iohn 1772  
 In pathmos wrot / which seyth that they that gon  
 By-forn this lamb & syng a song al newe  
 That neuere fleschely woman they ne knewe 1775

This pore widewe which that waytith al that nyȝt  
 Aftyr hire lytyl chil[d] & he cam nouȝt  
 ffor which as sone as it was dayis lyȝt  
 With face pale of drede & busy thouȝt 1779  
 Sche hath at scole & elles were hym souȝt  
 Tyl fynally sche gan so fer espye  
 That he last seyn was in the Ieuerye 1782

With moderis pite in hire brest enclosed [leaf 321, back]  
 Sche goth as sche were half out of hire mynde  
 To eueriplace where as sche hath supposid  
 Be liklyhede / hire lital child to fynde 1786  
 And eue on crystis modyr meke & kynde  
 Sche cryede & at the laste thus sche wrouȝte  
 Among the cursed Iewys sche hym souȝhte 1789

Sche askyth & sche fraynyth pitously  
 Of euery Iue that dwelte in thilke place  
 To telle hire of hire child wente out forth by  
 They seydyn nay but Ihesu of his grace 1793



Yaf in hire thouȝt with inne a lytyl space  
 That in that place aftyr hire sone sche cryede  
 Where he was casten in a pit be-syde 1796

O greete god that parfordedist this laude  
 By mouth of innocentis lo here thyn myght  
 This gemme of chastite this emeroude  
 And ek of martyredom the rubye bryȝt 1800  
 There he with throte I-korvyn lygh vp ryght  
 He alma redemptoris gan to synge  
 So loude that al the place gan to rynge 1803

The cristene folk that thurgh the strete wente  
 In comyn for to wonderyn vp-on this thyng  
 And hastyliche they for the prouost sento  
 He cam a-non with-outyn taryeng 1807  
 And heryeth Crist that is of heuene kyng  
 And his modyr honour of mankynde  
 And aftyr that the Iewis leet he bynde 1810

This child with pitous lamentacioun  
 Vp takyn was syngynge his song alwey  
 And with honour of greet processyoun  
 They caryen hym vn-to the nexte abbey 1814  
 His modyr swoūnyng by the beere lay  
 Vnnethe mygh[t]e the puple that was there  
 This newe Rachel bryngyn from the beere 1817

With turnement & with schameful deth echon [leaf 322]  
 This prouost doth these Iewis for to sterue  
 That of this mustere wiste & that a-noon  
 He nolde non swich cursedenesse obserue 1821  
 Euele schal he haue that euele wele disserue  
 Therefore with wilde hors he dede hem drawe  
 And aftyr that he hyng hem by the lawe 1824

Vp-on this beere lyth ay this Innocent  
 Byfore the highe auteer whil the masse laste  
 And aftyr that the albot with his couent  
 Han sped hem for to buryen hym ful faste 1828  
 And whan they holy watyr on hem caste  
 3it spak this child whan sprent was holy watyr  
 And song. O alma redemptoris mater 1831

This Abbot which that was an holy man  
 As monkys been or ellis oughten bee  
 This yonge child to coniure he be-gan  
 And seyde o deere child I halse the 1835  
 In vertu of the holy trynytee  
 Telle me what is thyn cause for to synge  
 Sithe that thyn throte is kit to myn lokynge 1838

Myn throte is kit vn-to myn nekke bon  
 Seyde this child & as be woye of kynde  
 I schulde a deyed 3a longe tyme a-gon  
 But Ihesu Crist as 3e in bokys fynde 1842  
 Wele that his glorie laste & be in mynde  
 And for the worschepe of his modyr deere  
 3it may I synge O Alma. loude & cleere 1845

This welle of mercy cristis modyr swete  
 I louede alwey as aftyr myn cunnynge  
 And whan that I myn lyf schulde for-lete  
 To me sche cam & bad me for to synge 1849  
 This anteme verayly in myn deyinge  
 As 3e han herd & whan that I hadde sunge  
 Me thouthe sche leyde a greyn vp-on myn tunge 1852

Wherefore I synge & synge mot certeyn [leaf 322, back]  
 In honour of that blysfyl maydyn fre  
 Tyl fro myn tunge I-takyn is the greyn  
 And aftyr that thus seyde sche to me 1856

Myn lytyl child now wele I feche the  
 Whan that the greyn is from thyn tunge take  
 Be nat agast I wele þe nat for-sake 1859

This holy monk this abbot hym mene I  
 His tunge out caughte & tok away the greyn  
 And he ȝaf vp the gost ful softly  
 And whan this abbot hadde this wondyr seyn 1863  
 Hise salte teris trekelede doun as reyn  
 And grof he fel al flat vn-to the grounde  
 And stille he lay / as he hadde leyn I-bounde 1866

The Conuent ek lay on the pauement  
 Wepynge & herynge Cristis modyr deere  
 And aftyr that they ryse & forth been went  
 And toke away this martir from his beere 1870  
 And in a tounge of marbilstonys cleere  
 Enclosyn they this lytil body sweete  
 There he is now god leue vs for to meete 1873

O yonge Hugh of Lyncoln slayn also  
 With cursede Iewis as it is notable  
 ffor it is but a lytil while I-go  
 Preye ek for vs we synful folk vnstable 1877  
 That of his mercy god so merciablen  
 On vs his greete mercy multiplye  
 ffor reuerence of his modyr marye / Amen 1880

**Heere hath the Prioress endid hire tale**

Byhold the myrie talkynge of the Hoost<sup>d</sup> to [leaf 322, back]  
Chaucer

**W**Han seyð wasal this myrakele euery man [leaf 323]  
As sobere was that wondir was to see  
Til that oure hoost Iapyn tho<sup>1</sup> be-gan [<sup>1</sup> later]  
And thanne aterst he lokede vp-on mee .i. Chaucer

And seide thus what man art thou quod he  
Thow lokyst as thou woldyst fynde an hare  
ffor euere vp-on the ground I se the staare 1887

Approchith neer & loke vp myryely  
Now ware þow seris & lat this man haue place  
He in the wast is schape as weel as I  
This weere a popet in an arm tenbrace 1891  
ffor ony weman smal & fayr of face  
He semyth eluych by his cuntenaunce  
ffor vn-to no wygh doth he no dalyaunce 1894

Sey now sumwhat syn othere folk han seyð  
Telle vs a tale of myrthe & that a-non  
Hoost quod I ne beth nat yuele apayed  
ffor othir tale certis can I non 1898  
But of a rȳm I lernede longe a-goon  
þe that is good quod he now schul we here  
Sum deynte thyng me thynkyth by hise cheere 1901

[No breaks in the MS between the stanzas: third lines set  
on the right.]

Heere begynnyth Chaucers tale of sere Thopas

[Fyt I.]

**T**<sup>1</sup>Estyth lordyngis in good entent [<sup>1</sup> The illuminator has  
put T, instead of L as  
directed.]  
And I wele telle verrayment  
Of myrthe & solas 1904

And of a knyght was fayr & gent

In batayle & in turnement

His name was sere Thopas 1907

I-born he was in fer cuntre

In flaunderis al be-3ounde þ<sup>e</sup> see

At poperyng in the place 1910

His fadir was a man ful fre

And lord he was of that cuntre

As it was godis grace 1913

Syre Thopas wex a doghty sweyn

Whit was hise face as payn demayn

Hise lippis rede as rose 1916

His rode is lyk skarlet engrayn

As I 3ow telle in good certayn

He hade a semely nose 1919

His heer his berd was lik saferon

[leaf 323, back]

That to his gerdil raughte a-doun

Hise schon of cordewayne 1922

Of brugis were hire hosyn broun

His robe was of siklatoun

That coste manye a Iayne 1925



- He coude hunte at wilde deer  
 And ryde on hauking for ryueer  
     With grey goshawk & hunde 1928  
 Therto he was a good archier  
 Of wrastelyng was theree non his pir  
     Theree ony ram schal stonde 1931
- fful manye a maydyn brygh in bour  
 They mornede for hym paramour  
     whan hem were bet to slepe 1934  
 But he was chast and no lechour  
 And sweete as is the brymbil flour  
     that beryth the rede hepe 1937
- And so it fil vp-on a day  
 ffor-sothe as I 3ow telle may  
     Sire Thopas wolde out ryde 1940  
 He worthith vp-on hise stede bay  
 And in his hand a launcegay  
     A long swerd by his syde 1943
- He prykyth thorw a fayr forest  
 Therein is manye a wylde best  
     ye bothe bukkys & hare 1946  
 And as he prykyth north & est  
 I telle it 3ow hym hadde al-mest  
     Bytid a sory care 1949
- Theree spryngyn erbis grete & smale  
 The lycorys & the Cetewale  
     And manye a clowe Ielofere 1952  
 And notemuge to putte in ale  
 Whethir it be moyst or stale  
     Or for to leye in cofere 1955

The bryddys synge it is non nay	
The sperhauk & the popyniay	
That Ioye it was to heere	1958
The thrustilcock made ek his lay	
The wode douwe vp-on the spray	
sche song ful loude & cleere	1961
Sire Thopas fil in loue longynge	
Al whan he herde the thrustil synge	
And prikede as he were wod	1964
Hise fayre stede in hise prykyng	
So swatte that men myȝte hym wrynge	
Hise sydys were al blod	1967
Sere topas ek so wery was	
ffor prykyng on the softe gras	
So fiers was hise corage	1970
That doun he leyde hym in the plas	
To makyn his stede sum solas	
And ȝaf hym good forage	1973
O seynte marye benedicite	
What eylyth this loue at me	
To bynde me so soore	1976
Me dremede al this nyght parde	[leaf 324]
An Elf queene schal myn leman be	
And slepe vndyr myn goore	1979
An Elf queene wele I haue I-wis	
ffor in this world no woman is	
Worthi to ben myn make	1982
In tounne	
Alle othere women I forsake	
And to an elf queene I me be-take	
by dale & ek by doūne	1986

- In-to his sadyl he clomb a-non  
 And prykyth ouyr style & ton  
     An elf queen for tespye 1989  
 Til he so longe hath rydyn & goon  
 That he fond in a pryue woon  
     The cūntre of fayrye 1992  
         So wilde  
 for in that cuntree was there non  
 [ . . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]  
     Neythir wif ne childe 1996
- Til that theere cam a greet geaunt  
 His name was sire olyfaunt  
     A *parlious* man of dede 1999  
 He seyde child by termagaunt  
 But ȝif thow pryke out of myn haunt  
     Anon I sle thyn steede 2002  
         With Mace  
 Here is this queen of fayrye  
 With harpe & pype & Symphonye  
     Dwellynge in this place 2006
- The child seyde also mote I the  
 To morwe wele I meete the  
     Whan I haue myn armoure 2009  
 And ȝit I hope parmafay  
 That thow schat with thyn launcegay  
     Abyen it ful soure 2012  
         Thy mawe  
 Thyn hauberk schal I persen if I may  
 Er it be fully pryme of the day  
     ffor heere schalt thow<sup>1</sup> been slawe [1 *altered*] 2016

Syre Thopas drow a-bok ful faste	
This Ieaunt at hym stonys caste	
Out of a fel staf slynge	2019
But fayre eschapith sire thopas	
And al was thour godys gras	
And thour his fayre berynga	2022
Yit lestyth lordyngis to myn tale	
Muryere than the nyghtyngale	
I wele ȝow rounne	2025
How sire Thopas with sydis smale	
Prykyngge ouyr hil & dale	
Is comyn a-geyn to toūne	2028
Hise merye men comaundede hee	
To make hym bothe gamyn & glee	
for nedys muste he fyghte	2031
With a geaunt with hedis thre	
ffor paramour & Iolyte	
Of oon that schon ful bryȝt	2034
Do come he seyde myne mynstralis	
And Gestourys for to tellyn talys	
A-non in myn armyng <sup>e</sup>	2037
Of romauncis that been royalis	(leaf 224, back)
Of popis & of Cardenalyz	
And ek of loue lykyngge	2040
They fette hym fyrst swete wyn	
And mede ek in a Mahelyn	
And royal spicerye	2043
Of gyngge breed that was ful fyn	
And lychorys & ek comyn	
With sugere that is trye	2046

- He dede next his white lere  
 Of cloth of lake fyn & cleere  
     A brech & ek a scherte 2049  
 And next his schirte an aketoun  
 And ouyr that an habyrioun<sup>1</sup> [<sup>1</sup> altered] 2052  
     for persynge of his herte 2052
- And ouyr that a fyn hauberk  
 Was al I-wrou3t of Iewys werk  
     ful stronge it was of plate 2055  
 And ouyr that his coote armour  
 As whit as is a lylve flour  
     In whiche he wolde debate 2058
- Hese shild was al of gold so red<sup>1</sup> [<sup>1</sup> These lines are written in an  
 other hand over an erasure.]  
 And there in was a borys hed<sup>1</sup>  
     A Charbokele by his syde 2061  
 And there he swor on ale & breed  
 How that the Ieaunt schulde be deed  
     By-tyde what betyde 2064
- Hise Iambieux were of quyrboyly  
 His swerdys schede of yuory  
     Hise helm of latoun bry3t 2067  
 His sadil was of rewel boon  
 His brydyl as the sunne It schon  
     Or as the moone lyght 2070
- Hise spere was of fyn cipres  
 That biddyth werre and no thyng pees  
     The hed ful scharpe Igrounde 2073  
 Hise steede was of dapil gray  
 It goth an ambil in the way  
     ful softeli & rounde 2076



In londe

Lo lordyngis<sup>1</sup> myne here is a fyt [<sup>1</sup> altered]

If 3e wele ony moore of it

To telle it wele I fonde 2080

## [Fyt II.]

Now holdyth 3oure mouth for charyte

bothe knygh &amp; lady free

And herkenyth to myn spelle 2083

Of batayle &amp; of chyualry

And of ladyis loue drewery

A-noon I wele 3ow telle 2086

Men spekyn of romauncis of prys

Of hornchild &amp; of Ipotys

Of Beevis & sire Gy 2089

Of sire lybeus &amp; playndamour

But sire Thopas beryth the flour

Of royal chyualry 2092

His goode stede al he be-strod

And forth vp-on his weye he glod

As sparkele out of bronde 2095[Vp on his creste he bar a tour. [Harl. MS 1758, leaf 168, back]]

And ther yn stiked a lilye flour.

God schilde his cors fro schonde. 2098

¶ And for he was knyght Auntrous.

He ne slepte in non hous.

But logged in his hood. 2101

His bright helme was his wonger.

And bi hym baited his dester.

Of herbis fyn & good. 2104

¶ Hym self drank water of the welle. [Harl. MS 1758]

As dide the knyght sir Percyuelle.

So worthely vnder wede.

Till it was on a daye. 2108

¶ Here endeth Sir Thopas.]

## [The prolog of Mellibe]

[MS Reg. 18 C II, leaf 190, back.]

**N**O more of this for goddes dignite  
 Quod oure oost for þou makest me  
 So wery of þin lewdenes  
 That also wisly god me bles 2112  
 Myn eres ake of thi darsty speche  
 Now suche a ryme þe deucl I be-teche  
 This may be wel ryme dogereH quod he  
 Whi so quod I why wilt þou lette me 2116  
 More of my tale than an other man  
 Sethyns it is þe beste ryme I can  
 By god quod he pleyonly I the say  
 Thou shalt no lenger rymen here to day 2120  
 Thow dost noght elles but dyspendest tyme  
 Sire oo word þou shalt no lenger ryme  
 Let see wheþer þou canst telle ought in geste  
 Or telle in prose somewhat at þe leste 2124  
 In whiche þer be somme merthe & som doctrine  
 Gladly quod I by goddes swete pyne  
 I wil 3ou telle a litel thing in prose  
 That oughte lyke 3ou as I suppose 2128  
 Other elles certes 3e ben to daungerous  
 Hit is a moral tale vertuous  
 Al be hit tolde somtyme in sundry wyse  
 Of sondry folk' as I shal 3ou deuyse 2132  
 As þus 3e wote wel euery euaungeliste  
 þat telleth vs of Ihesu Crist  
 Ne saith not al þing as his felawe doth  
 But' natheles her sentence is al soth 2136  
 And alle accorden as in her sentence  
 Al be ther in her tellynge difference

for some of hem seyn more & somme seyn lesse	
when þey his pitous passiõ expresse	2140
I mene of Marc <sup>e</sup> Matheu Luke and Ioñ	
But <sup>e</sup> douteles her sentence is al on	[leaf 197]
þerfore lordynges alle [I] 3ou beseche	
3if þat 3e pinke I varye in my speche	2144
As þus 3if þat I telle somewhat more	
Of prouerbes þen 3e haue herd byfore	
Comprehendid in þis litel tretys here	
To enforce with þe effecte of my matere	2148
And þoughe I nadde þe same wordes saye	
As 3e han herd 3it to alle 3ou I praye	
Blameth me not for as in myn sentence	
3e schal not fynden moche difference	2152
fro þe sentence of þe tretys lyte	
After þe whiche þis mery tale I wryte	
And herkeneth what I schal seye	
And lete me telle my tale I preye	2156

Here endith the prolog //]

[There are no line-numbers or breaks between the paragraphs in the MS. Tyrwhitt's breaks are kept here to prevent slight differences in the Six Texts throwing out many lines.]

[MS Reg. 18 C II, on leaf 197.]

[Here endith the prolog // And begynnep the tale of Melibe

[2157]

**A** Yong man whilom celled Melibe myghti and ryche  
bygat vpon his wyf<sup>e</sup> þat called was prudence a  
doughter whiche þat cleped sapience.

[2158] vpon a day fel þat he for his disport  
is went in to þe felde him to pleye / [2159] his wyf  
and eke his doghter hath he left with-ynne his hous of  
whiche þe dores were faste I-schet // [2160] ffoure of his  
olde foos han hit aspyed. and . setten laddres to þe walles  
of his hous and by þe wyndowes ben entred [2161] and  
betyn hys wyf and wounded his doughter with fyue  
mortal woundes in fyue sondry places / [2162] This is to  
sayn in here feet in here hond and in here eres in hire  
nose and in here mouth & laften her for deed and  
wenten here way //

[2163] When Melibeus retorned was azeyn vntil his hous  
and sawh aȝ þis meschief // And he I-lyke a mad man rend-  
yng his clothes gan to wyepe and crye euerlenger þe more //

[2164] Prudence his wyf<sup>e</sup> as ferforth as sche durste  
by-soght him of his wepyng<sup>e</sup> for to stynte [2165] but noght  
for-thi he gan to wipe & crye euer the lenger þe more //

[2166] This noble wyf prudence remembred here  
on þe sentence of Ovide in his book<sup>e</sup> þat cleped is þe Ovidius  
remedye of loue / where he saith: [2167] he is a fool  
þat desturbeth þe moder for to wipe in þe deeth of hire  
child til sche haue wepte her fille for a certeyn tyme:  
[2168] Then schal man don his diligence with  
amyable wordes hire to conforte and <sup>1</sup> to preye hire of



[MS Reg.  
18 C II,  
leaf 197.]

her wepyng<sup>1</sup> for to stynte: [2169] for whiche reson this noble prudence suffred her housbonde for to wepe and crye as for a certayn space // [2170] And when she sawh her tyme she saide him in þis wyse / Alas my lord quod she whi make ȝe ȝoure self for to be lyke a fool: [2171] fforsothe it perteyneth not to a wisman to maken suche a sorwe / [2172] ȝoure Doughter with þe grace of god shal be warisched and askape / [2173] And aft were it so þat sche right now were deed ȝe oughte not as for her deth] <sup>1</sup>ȝoure self dystroye // [2174] ¶ Senec seyth the wyse man schal nat take to greet discomfort for the deth of hise childeryn / [2175] but certis he schulde sufferyn it in pacience As wel as he a-bydyth the deth of hise propre persone /

[<sup>1</sup> leaf 327,  
Camb. Univ.  
Libr. MS  
Gg. 4. 27,  
begins here.]

[2176] ¶ This Melibeus answerde a-noon & seyde / What man quod he schulde of his wepynge stynte / that hath so greet a cause for to wepe / [2177] Ihesu crist oure lord hym self wepte for the deth of lasarus his freend [2178] ¶ Prudence answerede / certys weel I wot / Atempere wepyng is no thyng defendit to hym that sorweful is a-mongis folk / in sorwe / but it is rathere graunted hym to wepe [2179] ¶ The apostele paule vn-to the romaynys wrythth / Man schal reioyse with hem that makyn Ioye / And wepyn with sweche folk as wepyn / [2180] but thogh attempere wepyng be grauntid / outrageous wepynge certis is defendid / [2181] mesure of wepynge schulde been consideryd aftyr the loore that techith vs Senek [2182] ¶ Whan that thyn frend is deed quod he / let not thynne eyen to moyste been of teerys / ne to meche dreye / Al-thow thynne terys comyn to thynne eyen / lat hem nat fallyn [2183] And whan thou hast forgoon thyn freend [ . . . no gap in the MS.] & this is moore wysdom / than for to wepyn for thyn frend / whiche that thou hast loryn / for theere-inne is no boote / [2184] And therefore ȝif ȝe gouerne ȝow be sapience putte away sorwe out of ȝoure hertis / [2185] Rememberyth yow that Ihesus Syrat seyth

A man that is ioyous & glad in herte / it hym conseruyth floryschynge in his Age / & sothly sorweful herte makyt hise bonys dreye [2186] he seyth ek thus that sorwe in herte: sleth ful manye a man [2187] ¶ Salomon seyth / that ryght as mothis in the schepis flesh anyeth to the clothis / & the smale wermys to the tree / rygh so anyith sorwe to the herte. [2188] Wherefore vs oughte as weel in the deth of oure childeryn: as in the loos of oure goodys temperelys haue pacience

[2189] ¶ Remembrith yow vp-on the paciente Iob / Whan he hadde lost hise childeryn & his temperel sustaunce / & in his body endurynge & reseceuyd ful manye a greuous trybulacioun / yet seyde <sup>1</sup>he thus [2190] ¶ Oure lord hath [sente it me / oure lord hath] be-raft it me / rygh so as oure lord hath wold / rygh so it is don / I-blyssede be the name of oure lord / [2191] ¶ To these forseyde thyngis Answerde Melybeus to his wyf prudence ¶ Alle thynne wordys quod he been sothe & therto profitable / but trewely myn herte is troubeled / with this sorwe so greuously / that I not what to don. [2192] ¶ Lat calle quod Prudence thyn trewe frendys alle And thyn lynage / whiche that been wyse tellyth *3oure* cas And herkenyth what they seye in conseyllynge And *3ow* gouerne aftyr here sentente [2193] ¶ Salomon seith werke alle thyn thyngis by conseyll: & thow schalt neuere repente

[2194] ¶ Thanne by the conseyll of his wyf Prudence: this Mellibeus leet callyn / a gret congregacioun / of folk / [2195] as Surgeons Phisiciens olde folk And *3ynge* & some of hise olde enemyis reconsyled As by here semblaunt / to his loue & in to hise grace / [2196] & therewithal there come some of hise negheboris That dydyn hem reuerence / moore for dreede than for loue as it happith ofte / [2197] There comyn also manye subtyl flatererys / & wise aduocatys / lernede in the lawe

[2198] ¶ And whan these folk togedere assemblede were / this Mellibeus in sorweful wyse / schewede hem his cas /

[2199] & by the manere of hise speche / it semyd  
that in herte he bar a crewel yre / redy to doon venge-  
aunce vp-on hise fois / & sodeynly desyrede that the  
werre schulde begynne / [2200] but neuere the les ȝit axede  
he here conseyll / vp-on this matyere / [2201] A surgen by  
lycence / And assent of sweche as were wyse vp ros & vn-  
to Melybeus seyde as ye may here

[2202] ¶ Sire quod he / as to vs surgenys apertenyth  
that we do to euery wight the beste / that we can wheere as  
we been *with* holdyn / And to oure pacient that we don no  
damage / [2203] Wherefore it happith manye tyme / & ofte  
that whan twey men / hath euerych woundyd othyr .O.  
same surgen helyth hem bothe / [2204] Wherefore vn-to  
oure art it is nat *perteynent* to noryche werre / ne partyis  
to supporte [2205] ¶ But sertys as to the waryschyng <sup>1</sup>of  
ȝoure doughtir Al be it so sche be *perlyously*  
woundit we schul do so ententyf bysynesse / from day to  
nygh That with the grace of god sche schal been hool &  
sound / as soone as is possible / [2206] Almost ryȝt  
in the same wyse the phisycionys answeredyn / Saue that  
they seydyn a fewe wordys moore / [2207] that ryght  
as maladyis ben cureede by here contraryis / rygh so schal  
men waryche / werre: by vengeaunce [2208] ¶ Hise neghe-  
boris ful of enuye / Hise feynede frendis that semede  
reconsyld & hise flatererys [2209] madyn semblaunt  
Of wepyng / & empeyrede & agregede meche of this  
matyr. in preysynge greetly Mellibie / of mygh of power /  
of rychesse & of frendys / despisyng the power of hise  
aduersaryis [2210] & seydyn vtrelly that thy schuldyn Anon  
wrekyn hym on hise fois & begynne werre /

[2211] vp ros thanne an Aduocat / that was wys /  
by leue & by conseyll of othere / that weere wyse & seyde  
[2212] ¶ Lordyngis the neede which that we been assembled  
in this place / is ful heuy thyng / & an heygh matire  
[2213] by cause of the wrong & the wikkedenesse that  
hath been doon / & ek by resoun of the greete damages / that

in tyme comynge been possible to fallyn for the same /  
 [2214] & ek by resoun of the greet rychesse &  
 power of the partyis bothe [2215] for the whiche resonys /  
 it weere a ful greet peril / to erryn in this matyer [2216]  
 ¶ Wherefore Mellybeus this is oure sentens. we conseyle  
 3ow a-bouyn alle thyng / that rygh a-non thow do thyn  
 dylygence / in kepyng of thyn propre persone in swich a  
 wyse / that thow ne wante noon espie / ne wache thyn body  
 for to saue [2217] ¶ And aftyr that we conseyle That in  
 thyn hous thu sette suffyciaunt garnysoun. so that they may  
 as weel thyn body as thyn hous defende [2218] But certys  
 for to meue werre / ne sodeynly for to doon vengeauns  
 we may not deme in so lytyl tyme. that it weere profit-  
 able / [2219] Wherefore we axe leyser & espase to haue  
 delyberacioun / in this cas to deeme [2220] ffor the comune  
 prouerbe seyth this / He that soone demyth sone  
 schal repente: [2221] & ek men seyn that <sup>1</sup>thylke Iuge is  
 wys that sone vndyrstondyth a matiere And Iugith be  
 leyseer / [2222] for al be it so that alle taryng be a-noyeful  
 algatis it is not to be repreuyd in yeuyng of iugement / ne in  
 vengeaunce takynge whan it is suffisaunt & resonabele /  
 [2223] & that schewede oure lord Ihesu cryst by en-  
 saumple / for whan that woman was takyn in  
 auouterye was brough in his presence to knowyn what  
 schulde been don of hire persone / al be it that he wyste  
 weel / hym self what that he wolde answer: yet ne wolde he  
 nat answer sodeynly but he wolde haue deliberacioun &  
 in the ground he wrot / twyis / [2224] & by these  
 causis: we axe deliberacioun & we schul thanne by  
 the grace of god conseyle the thyng that schal been  
 profitable //

[2225] vp styrtyn thanne the 3onge fok at onys &  
 the moste partye of that cumpanye / han skorned this olde  
 wise man And begunne to make noyse / & seydyn / that  
 [2226] ryght so as whil that yryn is hoot / men schuldyn  
 smytyn. rygh so schuldyn men wreke here wrongis / whil



that they been frosche & newe & with loude voys.  
[*se escrièrent, "guerre! guerre! guerre!"*]

[2227] *Adonc se leva un des anciens,*] And with hise hand made contenance that men schuldyn holdyn hem styll / and ȝeuyñ hym audience. [2228] lordyngis quod he theere is ful manye a man that cryeth werre werre: that wot ful lytil what werre amountyth / [2229] werre at hise begynny[n]g hath so greet an entre and so large; that euery whight may entre whan hym lykyth / & lyghtely fynde werre / [2230] but certis what ende therof schal falle: it is nat lyght to knowe [2231] ffor sothly whan that werre is onys begunne: there is ful manye a child born of hise modyr that schal sterue ȝong be cause of thilke werre / & ellys lyue in sorwe & deye in wrechedenesse / [2232] And therefore or that ony werre begynne men must haue gret conseyll / & gret deliberacyoun [2233] And whan this olde man wende for to enforse his tale be resouns wel nygh alleattonys/bygunne they to ryse / for to brekyn his tale & bodyn hym ful oftyñ hise wordis to abregge [2234] for sothly he that pre'chith to hem / that lestyth not to heere hise wordys: his: sarmoun hem anoyeth [2235] ¶ ffor Ihesus Syrak seyth. that Musik in wepyng: is a-noyous thyng this is to seyne / as meche awaylyth to speke by-fore folk / to whiche hise speche anoyeth as doth to synge be-fore hym that wepith [2236] ¶ And whan that þis wyse man wantede audience: al schamefast he sette hym doun / agayn [2237] ¶ ffor salomon seyth. There as thow maght haue noon audience / enforce the not to speke / [2238] I se weel quod this wyse man that the comune prouerbe is soth that good conseyll wantyth whan it is most neede. [2239]

**A**nd ȝit hadde this Melibeus in his conseyll manye folk that priuily in hise eere conseylede hym / certeyn thyng. & conseylede hym the contrarye: in general audyence// [2240] Whanne Melibeus hadde herd that the grettere



partye of his conseyl were acorded that he schulde make werre: a-noon he concentede to here conseylunge And fully affermede hire centence [2241] ¶ Thanne dame . prudence / whan that sche saw how that hire husbonde schop hym for to wreke hym on hise fois & to begynne werre / Sche in ful humble wyse whan sche sagh hire tyme / seyde hym these wordys [2242] Myn lord quod sche / I 3ow beseche al hertyly / as I dar & can . ne hastyth 3ow to faste / And for alle guerdounnys as 3euyth me audyence [2243] ¶ ffor Piers Alfonse seyth / who so that doth to the othir good or harm / haste the not to quite it / for in this wise / thi frend wole abyde / & thyn enemy schal the lengere lyue in drede // [2244] The prouerbe seyth / he hastyth weel that wisely can abyde / And in wikke hast is no profyt

[2245] ¶ This Melibee answered vn-to his wyf prudence I purpose [. . .] not to werkyn by thyn conseyl for manye causis & resonys / for certys euery whit wele holdyn me thanne a fool / [2246] this is to seyne / If I for thyn conseylunge wolde schaunge thyngis that been ordeyned And affermede be so manye wise [2247] ¶ Sec-undely I seye . <sup>1</sup>That alle wemen been wekke & noon good of hem alle . ffor of a thousent men seyth Salomon / I fond on good man / but certis of alle wemen good weman fond I neuere [2248] ¶ And also certys 3if I gouernede me by thyn conseyl: it schulde seme that I hadde 3ouyn the the maisterye / & goddys forbode that it so were / [2249] for Ihesus Sirak seyth / that 3if the wyf haue the maysterye / sche is contraryous to hire husbonde [2250] ¶ And Salomon seyth neuere in thyn lyf to thyn wyf / ne thyn child / ne to thyn frend ne 3eue power ouyr thyn self / for bettere it weere That thynne childeryn axsyn of thyn persone thyngis that hem nedyth: than thou see thyn self in the hondys of thynne childeryn / [2251] And also 3if I wolde werke by thyn conseyl / certis myn conseyl muste been secre til it weere tyme that it muste ben

knowe & this it may nat bee [2252. For it is written,  
 'the Iangelerye of women can hide thyngis  
 that they wot nought.' [2253] Furthermore the philo-  
 sopher saith, 'in wikkede conseyl wemen venquysse men ;'  
 and for these reasons I ought not to make use of thy  
 counsel. *See lines 2274, 2280, p. 209, 210, below.*] [2254]

**W**Han dame Prudence ful debonerly &  
 with greet pacience hadde herd al that hire  
 husbonde hadde seyde & that hym likede for  
 to seyne / thanne axed sche of hym lycence for to spekyn  
 & seyde in this wyse [2255] ¶ Myn lord quod sche as  
 to 3oure fyrste resoun certis it may lyghtely been answeyrd  
 ffor I seye that it is no folye for to chaunge conseyl / whan  
 the thyng is chaungit / or ellys whan the þyng semyth othir  
 wyse than it was by forn / [2256] And moore-ouyr I seye /  
 that thogh that 3e han sworn & by-hight to perforce 3oure  
 empyrse / & nathe-les ye weyue to perforce tilkesame empyrse  
 by iuste cause / men schulde nat seyn therefore / that 3e  
 weere a lyere ne for-sworn [2257] for the bok seyth that the  
 wyse man makyth no lesyng : whan he turnyth hise corage  
 to the bettere . [2258] And al be it so that 3oure empyrse be  
 establid & ordeined / by gret multitude of folk / 3it thar 3e  
 not accomplyssche thikke same ordynau[n]ce but 3ow lyke //  
 [2259] ffor the trouthe of thyngis & the profyt been  
 rathere ffoundyn in fewe folk that been wyse & ful of  
 resoun than by greet multytude of folk theere euery man  
 cryeth & clateryth what that hym lykyth / sothly  
 swich <sup>1</sup>multytude is nat honest / [2260] And to the secunde  
 resoun where that 3e seyn that alle wemen been wekke .  
 saue 3oure grace / certis 3e dispise alle wemen in this  
 wyse / & he that alle dispiseth : alle displesyth as seyth the  
 book / [2261] & senek seyth / that who so wele haue sapi-  
 ence . schal no man dispreyse / but he schal gladly teche the  
 cience that he can : with-outyn presumpeioun or pride /  
 [2262] And sweche thyngis as he nought ne can : he  
 schal not been aschamed to lerne hem / & enquire of lasse

folk than hym self [2263] And syre that there hath  
 been ful manye a good woman: may lyghtely been preuyd /  
 [2264] for certys / sere oure lord Ihesu crist / wolde  
 neuere han descendit to been born of a woman: 3if alle  
 wemen hadde been wekke / [2265] And aftyr that for  
 the greete bounte / that is in oure lord Ihesu crist /  
 whan he was resyn from deth to lyue / aperede rathere to a  
 woman than to hise apostellis / [2266] And thogh  
 that salomon seyth that he ne fond neuere woman  
 good: it ne folwyth nat therfore that alle wemen been  
 wikke / [2267] for thow that he ne fond no good  
 woman: certys manye a nothir man hat foundyn  
 manye a woman ful good & trewe [2268] ¶ Or ellis  
 the entent of Salomon perauenture was this / that as in  
 souerein bounte he fond no woman / [2269] this is to  
 seyne that there is no wy3t that hath souereyn bountee  
 saue god a-lone / as he hym self recordyth in hise Euaun-  
 gelie [2270] for there is no cryature so good: that he  
 ne wantith sumwhat of the perfeccioun of god that is his  
 makere [2271] ¶ Your thredde resoun is this / 3e seyn þat 3if  
 3e gouerne 3ow by myn conseyll: it schulde seme that 3e  
 hadde 3eue me the maystrye & the lordschepe ouyr 3oure  
 persone / [2272] Sire saue 3oure grace / it is nat so / for  
 if it so were that no man schulde been conseyled but only  
 of hem that hadde lordschepe & maystrye of his persone:  
 men wolde nat been conseyled / so ofte / [2273] for sothly  
 thilke man that axsith conseyll of a purpos / 3it hath he  
 fre choys whether he wele werke by that conseyll / or  
 noon [2274] ¶ And <sup>1</sup>as to 3oure forte resoun / there 3e  
 seyen that the Iangelerye of women can hide thyngis that  
 they wot nought As ho sey that a woman can not  
 hyde that sche wot [2275] Sire these wordys been vndyr-  
 stonde / of women that been Iangleressis / & wekkede /  
 [2276] of whiche wemen men seyn / that thre thyngis  
 dryuyn a man out of his hous / that is to seyne smoke /  
 droppynge of reyn & wikkede wyuys / [2277] And

of sweche wemen seyth salomon / that it weere bettere to dwelle  
 in disert: than with a wekkede woman that is ryotous / [2278]  
 And sire by 3oure leue that am not .I. [2279] for 3e han ful  
 ofte assayed myn grete sylence & myn greete pacience / &  
 ek how wel that I can hyde & helyn thyngis that  
 men oughtyn secrely to hidyn [2280] ¶ And sothly as to  
 3oure fyfte resoun where as 3e seyn that in wikkede con-  
 seyl / wemen venquysse men / god wot thikke resoun  
 stant heere in no stede / [2281] for vndyrstonde now 3e  
 axe conseyl to do wekkedenesse / [2282. *et se tu vouloies user  
 de mauvais conseil et de mal faire*] & 3oure wif restreynyth  
 thilke wekkede purpos / & ouyr-comyth 3ow be resoun & be  
 good conseyl / [2283] certys 3oure wyf: oughte rather be  
 preysed / than I-blamyd / [2284] thus schul 3e vndyr-  
 stonde the philysophere / that seyth In wekkede conseyl  
 women wenquysschyn here husbondys [2285] ¶ And there  
 as 3e blamyn alle wemen & here resonys / I schal schewe  
 manye ensaumplys that manye a woman hath  
 been ful good and 3it been / & here conseyls holsum  
 & profitable [2286] ¶ Ek sum men han seyde that the  
 conseyllynge of women is othir to dere or to  
 lytyl of prys [2287] but al be it so that ful manie a  
 woman is badde & here conseyl vile / & not worth /  
 3it han men foundyn ful manye a good woman / & ful  
 descreeet & wis in conseylllynge / [2288] lo Iacob by  
 conseyl of hise moodyr Rebekka / wan the benysoun of  
 ysaak his fadyr & the lordschepe ouyr alle hise bretheryn /  
 [2289] Iudith by hire goode conseyl: delyuerede the cete of  
 Bethulye in whiche sche dwellede out of the bondys of  
 Olofernus / that hadde it be-segit & wolde it al distroye  
 [2290] ¶ Abygail deliuerede Nabal hire husbonde <sup>1</sup>from  
 Daudid the kyng þat wolde han slayn hym & a-paysed  
 the yre of the kyng bi hire wit / & by hyre goode con-  
 seylyng [2291] Hester by hire goode conseyl / enhaunsede  
 gretly the peple of god in the regne / of Assuerus the kyng  
 [2292] ¶ And the same bountee in good conseyllynge of



manye a good woman may men telle / [2293] & moore  
ouyr / whan that oure lord hadde creat Adam / oure forme  
fadyr / he seyde in this wyse / [2294] It is not good to be a  
man a-loone / make we to hym an helpe / semblable to hym  
self // [2295] Heere may 3e se / that if that wemen  
weere not goode / ne here conseil good & profytable :  
[2296] oure lord god of heuene wolde neythir han wrougt  
hem / ne callede hem helpe of man / but rather confusoun of  
man / [2297] And there seyde onys a clerk in two wers /  
What is betere than gold. Iaspre. What is betere than  
Iaspre / Wysdom / [2298] What is betere than  
wysdom / woman / & What is betere than good  
woman / no thyng. [2299] And sire by manye opere  
resonys may 3e se þat manye weemen been goode /  
& here conseil good & profitable / [2300] and therfore  
3if 3e wele troste to myn conseil : I schal restore 3ow  
3oure dou3tyr hol & sound / [2301] and ek I wele do 3ow  
so mechil that 3e schul haue honour in this cause [2302]

**W**Han Melibee / hadde herd the wordys / of his wyf  
Prudence / he seyde thus [2303] ¶ I se wel that the  
word of Salomon is soth // he seyth that wordis /  
that been spokyn discretly by ordenaunce : been hony-  
combis / for they 3eue swetenesse / to the soule / & holsom-  
nesse to the body [2304] ¶ And wif by cause / offe thyne  
swete wordys / and ek for I haue asayed & preuyd thyn greete  
sapience / & thyn greete trouthe / I wele gouerne me by thyn  
conseyl in alle thyng /. [2305]

**N**Ow seere quod dame prudence / an syn 3e wouche  
saf to been gouernyd by myn conseil / I wele  
enforme 3ow / how 3e schul gouerne 3ow / self in  
chesynge of 3oure conseil [2306] ¶ 3e schal fyrst in alle 3oure  
werkys / meekely besekyn to the hye god that he wele  
been 3oure conseylour / [2307] and schapith 3ow to swych  
entente that he 3eue 3ow conseil & confort as tauzte  
Thobie his sone // [2308] At alle tymys thow schat <sup>1</sup>plese



god / And preye hym to dresse thynne weyis / and loke þat  
 alle thynne conseylis / been in hym for euere moore / [2309]  
 seynt Iame / ek seyth / If onye of 3ow haue nede of sapience /  
 axe it of god / [2310] And aftyrward thanne schal 3e take  
 conseyl in 3oure self / & examyne wel 3oure thouȝtis / of  
 sweche thyngis / as 3ow thyngkyth that been best for 3oure  
 profyt [2311] and thanne schul 3e dryue forth / from 3oure  
 herte the thyngis that been contrarious to good conseyl /  
 [2312] that is to seyne / yre coueytise / & hastyfnesse /

[2313] ffyrst he that axsith conseyl of hymself / certis  
 he muste ben with-outyn Ire / for manye causes // [2314]  
 The ferste is this / he that hat gret wrathe & yre in  
 hym self he wenyth alwey that he may don thyng: that he  
 may not doon / [2315] And secundely he that is yrous /  
 & wratheful / he ne may not wel deme / [2316] And he  
 that may not wel deme / may not weel conseyle [2317] ¶ A-  
 nothir is this / that he that is yrous & wratheful as seyth  
 Senek / ne may not spekyn but blameful thyngis / [2318]  
 and with hise vicyous wordis he steryth othere folk to  
 angir / & to yre [2319] ¶ And ek sere 3e muste dryue  
 coueytise out of 3oure herte [2320] ffor thapostele seyth /  
 that coueytise / is rote of alle harmys / [2321] & truste  
 weel / that a coueytous man ne can not deeme ne thyñke:  
 but only to fulfille the ende of his coueytise / [2322] and  
 sertis that ne may neuere / been aconplichit / ffor euere  
 the moore habundaunce that he hath of rychesse the more  
 he desyryth [2323] ¶ And the moste also dryuyth out  
 of 3oure herte / hastyfnesse / for certys [2324] 3e may  
 not demyn for the beste of a sodeyn thouȝt that fallyth in  
 3oure herte but 3e muste avyse 3ow on it ful ofte /  
 [2325] for as 3e herde heere be-forn / the comune prouerbe / is  
 this / that he that sone demyth soone repentyth //

[2326] Sire 3e been not alwey I-lyk in disposicioun /  
 [2327] for certys sum thyng / that sumtyme semyth to  
 3ow that it is good for to do: a nothir tyme it semyth  
 to 3ow the contrarye

[2328] ¶ Whan ȝe han takyn conseyll in ȝoure self / & han demyd by good deliberacioun / swych thyng as ȝow semyth best / [2329] thanne rede I ȝow <sup>1</sup>that ȝe kepe it secree / [2330] bewreye not ȝoure conseyll to no persone / but if so be that ȝe wenyn sekyrly / that thorw ȝoure bewreyinge / ȝoure condycioun schal ben to ȝow the moore profitable // [2331] ffor Ihesus Syrak seyth neythir to thyn fo ne to thyn frend / discouere not thyn secre ne thyn folye / [2332] for they wele ȝeue ȝow audyence & lokinge & supportacioun in ȝoure presence / & skorne ȝow in ȝoure absence / [2333] A nothir clerk seyth / that skarsely schalt thou fyndyn ony persone / that may kepe conseyll secrely / [2334] the bok seyth / whil that thou kepist thyn conseyll in thyn herte thou kepist it in thyn prysoun / [2335] And whan thou bewreyist thyn conseyll to ony whit he holdyth the in his snare [2336] And therfore ȝow is betere / to hyde ȝoure conseil in ȝoure herte: than preyen hym to whom ȝe han bewreyed ȝoure conseyll: that he wele kepe it clos & styлле [2337] ¶ ffor Seneca seyth If so be that thou ne mayst / not thyn owene conseyll hyde: how mayst thou preye ony othir whit thyn conseyll secrely to kepyn / [2338] But natheles ȝif thou wene sekyrly that thyn bewreyinge of thyn conseyll to a persone wele make thyn condycioun stondyn in the betere plyt thanne schat thou telle hym tyn conseyll in this wyse [2339] ffyrst thou schat make no semblaunt whethir the were leuere pes or werre / or this or that / ne shew hym nat thyn wil ne thyn entent / [2340] for ~~th~~roste weel that comounly these / conseyllourys been flatererys [2341] namely the conseyllourys of greete lordis / [2342] for they enforse hem alwey rathere to speke plesaunte wordis enclynyng to othere lordys lust: than othere that been trewe / & profitable / [2343] And therfore men seyn / that ryche men / han selde good conseyll / but if he haue it of hym self / [2344] and after that thou schat considere thyne frendys / & thynne enemyis. [2345] And as touchinge thyne frendys / thou schat con-

sideryn whiche are most feythful / & most  
 wys & oldeste & most apreuid in conseylunge /  
 [2346] & of hem schalt thow axe thyne conseyle: as the  
 caas requiryth /

[2347] I seyde that fyrst <sup>1</sup>3e schul clepyn to 3oure con-  
 seyl 3owre frendis that been trewe // [2348] ffor Salomon  
 seyth that ry3t as the herte of a man delythth in sauour  
 that is sote / ry3t so the conseyl of trewe frendys  
 3euyth swetnesse to the soule / [2349] & he seyth also theree  
 may no thyng [be] to the trewe frend / [2350] for  
 certis gold ne syluyr ben not so meche worth: as the  
 goode wyl of a trewe frend [2351] ¶ And ek he seyth  
 that a trewe frend / is a strong defens / who so that  
 it fyndyth: sertis he fyndyth a greet tresor  
 [2352] ¶ Thanne schul 3e ek considere If that 3oure  
 trewe frendis: been descreete / & wise ffor the bok  
 seyth / Axse alwey thyn conseyl of hem that been wyse /  
 [2353] And by this same resoun / schul 3e clepyn to 3oure  
 conseyl / of 3oure frendis / that been of age / Sweche as han  
 seyn / & been expert in manye thyngis And been apreuyd  
 in manye thyngis conseilynge / [2354] ffor the bok seyth  
 that in olde men is the sapience / & in long tyme  
 the prudence // [2355] And tullius seyth / that greeete  
 thyngis ne ben not ay accompliced / be strenthe ne be  
 delyuerenesse of body / But by conseyl be autoritee  
 of personys / & by science / the whiche thre thyngis  
 ben not feblid by age / but certys they enforsyn & en-  
 cresyn day be day // [2356] And thanne schal 3e keepe  
 this for a general reule / ffyrst schal 3e clepe to 3oure  
 conseyl a fewe of 3oure frendys that been especial  
 [2357] ffor Salomon seyth / Manye frendis haue thow /  
 but a-mong a thousent cheese the on to been thyn conseyl-  
 our [2358] ffor al be it so / that thow ne telle thyn  
 conseyl but to a fewe / thow mayst afterward tellyn it to  
 mo yf it be neede / [2359] but loke alwey that thyn  
 conseylouris haue thilke thre condiciounnys / that I haue seyd

before / þat is to seye / that they been trewe wyse &  
 of old experience / [2360] And werke not in euery  
 thingis alwey be on conseylour alone / for sumtyme byhouyth  
 it to been conseyled by manye / [2361] ffor salomon seyth /  
 Saluacioun of thyngis is / where as there been manye  
 conseylourys

[2362] ¶ Now sithe that I haue told ȝow / of wech folk  
 ȝe schul ben conseylid. now wele I teeche ȝow whiche  
 conseyl ȝe oughte to eschewe [2363] ¶ ffyrst ȝeschul eschewe/  
 the con<sup>1</sup>seylyng of folys / for salomon seyth take no con-  
 seyl of a fool / for he ne can not conseyle but aftyr his  
 owene lust & his affeccioun / [2364] The book seyth /  
 that the properte of a fol is this he trowyth lyghtely  
 harm of euery wight / & lyȝtely trowyth alle bounte in  
 hym self / [2365] Thow schalt ek eschewe / the conseylunge  
 of alle flatereris wheche as enforsen hem rathere to preysyn  
 ȝoure persone by flaterye than to telle ȝow the sothe-  
 ffastnesse of thyngis /

[2366] Wherfore Thullyus seyth / among alle the  
 pestelences that been / in frenchepe / the gretteste is  
 flaterye / & therfore it is more neede / that thow eschewe  
 & drede flatererys than ony othir peple // [2367] The  
 bok seyth thow schalt rathere drede & fle from the  
 swete wordis of flaterynge preyseris / than from the egere  
 wordis of thyn frend that seyth the thyne sothis [2368]  
 ¶ Salomon seyth that the wordis of a flaterere is a snare  
 to cachyn innocentis / [2369] he seyth also / that he  
 that spekyth to hise frend / wordis of swetnesse & of  
 plesaunce: settith a net be-forn hise feet to cachyn hym /  
 [2370] & therefore seyth Tullius / Enclayne not thyne  
 eris to flatereris / ne take no conseyl of wordis of  
 flaterye / [2371] And Catoun seyth Auyse the weel &  
 eschewe wordis of swetnesse & of plesaunce  
 [2372] ¶ And ek thow schalt eschewe the conseylunge of  
 thyne olde enemyis that been reconsyled // [2373] The  
 bok seyth that no wight retornyth sauely into the



grace of hise olde enemy [2374] ¶ And ysope seyth / ne  
 truste not to hem to wheche thow hast had sumtyme werre  
 or enmytee ne telle hem not thyn conseyll / [2375] And  
 Seneca tellyth the cause why / It may not be seyth he /  
 that where as greet feer long tyme hath deured: that  
 there ne dwellyth sum vapour of warmnesse [2376] And  
 therfore Seyth Salomon / in thyn olde fo truste neuere /  
 [2377] ffor sekirly / thow thyn enemy be reconsyled /  
 & makyth the cheer of humylite / & loutyth to the  
 with hise heed / ne truste hym neuere / [2378] ffor sekirly  
 hemakyth thilke feynede humylitee more for his owene profyt  
 than for loue of thyn persone / by cause that he dem-  
 yth to haue victorie ouyr thyn persone / by swich feynede  
 contenance / the <sup>1</sup> whiche victorie / he myȝte not haue be  
 stryf or werre / [2379] & Petyr Alfonse seyth make non  
 felaueschep with thynne olde enemyis / for ȝif thow do hem  
 bounte: they wele peruertyn it in to wikkedenesse //  
 [2380] And ek thow muste eschewe the wekedenesse of hem  
 & the conseyll that been thynne seruauantis & beryn the grete  
 reuerence / for perauenture they seyn / it moore for drede than  
 for loue. [2381] And therfore seyth a philisofere in this  
 wyse / There is no whit perfytely trewe to hym that he to  
 soore dredyth / [2382] And Tullius seyth / there is no  
 myȝt so greet of ony Emperour / that longe may endure /  
 but ȝif he haue moore loue of the peple than drede  
 [2383] ¶ Thow schalt also enchewe the conseylynge of folk  
 that been dronkelewe / for they ne can no conseyll hyde /  
 [2384] ffor Salomon seyth there is no priuyte: theree as  
 regnyth dronkenesse // [2385] ȝe schal also han in suspect /  
 the conseylynge of sweche folk as conseyle ȝow o thyng  
 priuily / & conseyle ȝow the contrarie opynly [2386]  
 ¶ ffor Cassiodere seyth / that it is a manere sleȝte to  
 hynderyn whan a man schewith to don on thyng pryuyly &  
 werkyth the contrarie opynly / [2387] Thow schalt also  
 haue in suspect / the conseylynge of wekede folk ffor the  
 bok seyth the conseylynge of wekede folk: is alwey ful



of fraude / [2388] And Daudid seyth blisful is that man  
that hath not folwid the conseylynge of schrewis / [2389]  
Thow schalt also eschewe the conseylynge of 3onge folk  
for here conseyl is not rype [2390]

**N**ow sere sithe I haue schewyd to 3ow of whiche folk  
3e schul take 3oure conseyl / & of whiche folk 3e schul  
folwe the conseyl: [2391] now wele I teche 3ow  
how 3e schul examyne 3oure conseyl after the doctryne of.  
thullyus [2392] ¶ In examynynge of 3oure conseylourys:  
3e schul considere many thyngis / [2393] Aldyrferst thow  
schat considere that in thilke thyng that thow purposyst  
& vp-on what thyng thow wilt haue conseyl / that verray  
trouthe be seyde & conseruyd / This is to seyne / Telle  
trewely thyn tale / [2394] for he that seyth fals may not  
weel been conseyled / in that cas of whiche he lyeth / [2395]  
And <sup>1</sup>after this thow schat considere the thyngis that  
acordyn to that / thow purposist to don by thyn conseyl-  
ours 3if resoun acordyn therto / [2396] & ek 3if thyn  
my3t may atteyne therto / & 3if the more part / & the  
betere part of thyne conseylouris acordyn therto / or no //  
[2397] Thanne schalt thow considere / What thyng schal  
folwe of that conseyllynge as. hate. pees. w[e]rre.  
grace. profyt or damage & manye othere thyngis /  
[2398] [*et en toutes ces choses*] thow schalt chese the  
beste / & weyuyn alle othere thyngis [2399] ¶ Thanne  
schaltthow considere / of what rote is engenderede the matyre  
of this conseyl / & what freut it may conteyne / & engen-  
deryn [2400] ¶ Thanne schalt [thow] considere ek alle these  
causes from whens they been sprongyn [2401] And  
whanne 3e han examynyed 3oure conseyl as 3e haue seyde /  
& whiche partye is the betere & more profitable And  
han aproued it be manye wyse folk & olde. [2402]  
thanne schat thow considere: 3if thow may3t perforce it &  
makyn of it a good ende / [2403] ffor resoun wele /  
that ony man schulde begynne a thyng / but 3if he my3te  
perforce it as hym oughte / [2404] Ne no w3t schulde

take vp-on hym / so heuy charge / that he myȝte not bere  
 it / [2405] for the prouerbe seyth / he that to meche  
 enbraset distreynyth lityl / [2406] And catoun seyth /  
 Assay to don swich thyng as thou hast power to don /  
 lest that the charge appresse the not so sore / that the  
 be-houith to weyue thyng that thou hast beguene  
 [2407] & ȝif so be that thou be endoute / wheþer thou  
 mayȝt perforce it or non chese rather to suffere  
 than begynne / [2408] And Petyr Alfonce seyth / ȝif  
 thou hast myȝt to doon a thyng / of whiche thou muste  
 repente: it is betere // ȝa // than nay / [2409] this is  
 to seyne the is betere to helde thyn tunge stylye: than  
 for to spekyn / [2410] Thanne may ȝe vnderstonde by  
 strongere resonys / that ȝif thou hast power / to perforce a  
 werk of whiche thou auht repente: thanne is it betere /  
 that thou suffere / than begynne / [2411] weel seyn they that  
 defendyn euery wiȝt to asay a thyng of whiche he is  
 endoute / whethir he may perforce it or no [2412]  
 And aftyr whan ȝe han examynyed ȝoure <sup>1</sup>conseyl as I  
 haue seyde befor / & knowyn weel that ȝe may per-  
 force ȝoure emprise conforme it thanne sadli til it be at  
 an ende— [2413]

**N**OW is it resoun & tyme that I schewe ȝow  
 whanne & wherefore / that ȝe may chaunge ȝoure con-  
 seylourys *with-outyn* reprove / [2414] Sothly a man  
 may chaungyn hise [*conseil et son*] purpos ¶ ȝif the cause  
 cesseth or whanne a new cas betydyth [2415] ¶ ffor the lawe  
 seyth that vp-on thyngis / that newly betydyn / byhouyth  
 newe conseyl / [2416] & seneca seyth / ȝif thyn conseyl  
 is come to the eeris of thynne enemy / chaunge thyn conseyl.  
 [2417] Thou mayst also chaunge thyn conseyl: ȝif so be  
 that thou fynde that be errour / or be othere  
 cause / harm or damage / may betyde / [2418] Also  
 ȝif thyn conseyl [*est deshonneste, ou vient de cause  
 deshonneste*, [2419] *car les lois dient que toutes pro-  
 messes* that] be dishonest. been of no value /

[2420] And ek ȝif it so be / that it be impossible / or may  
not been goodly performyd or kept //

[2421] And take this for a general rewle / that euery  
conseyl þat is affermyd so strongly that it may not been  
chongit for no condicioun that may betyde / I seye that  
thilke conseyl is wikke [2422]

**T**His Melibeus whan he hadde herd the doctryne / of  
his wyf / Dame Prudence answered in this wise  
[2423] Dame quod he as ȝit into this tyme / ȝe  
han weel & conabely tauȝt me as in general / how I  
schal gouerne me in chesyng & in wotholdyng  
of myne conseylouris [2424] ¶ But now wolde I fayn that  
ȝe woldyn condessendyn in especial / [2425] & tellyn  
how ȝow lykyth or what semyth ȝow by oure conseylouris  
that we han chosyn in oure present neede / [2426]

**M**Yn lord quod sche I beseke ȝow in alle humblesse that  
ȝe wele nat wilfully repleye // a-ȝen myne resonys /  
ne distempere ȝoure herte thow I speke thyng that  
ȝow displese / [2427] ffor god wot that as in myn entent /  
I speke it for ȝoure beste. for ȝoure honour & for ȝoure  
profit ek / [2428] And sothly I hope that ȝoure be-  
nyngnete wele takyn it in pacience / [2429] Trustith me  
weel / quod sche that ȝoure conseyl / as in this cas 'ne schulde  
nat as to spekyn propirly / been callyd a conseylunge / But a  
mocioun or a meuyng of foly [2430] in whiche conseyl  
ȝe han erred / [*en moult de manière*]

[2431] [*Premièrement, tu as erré*] in the assem-  
blyng of ȝoure conseylouris / [2432] ffor ȝe schulde  
ferst a clepid a fewe folk / [*et puis après  
plusieurs*] if it hadde been neede /  
[2433] But certis ȝe han clepid sodeynly to ȝoure con-  
seyl / a greet multitude of peple ful chargeaunt & ful  
anoyous for to heere [2434] ¶ Also ȝe han errid for  
there as ȝe schulde only haue clepid to ȝoure conseyl  
ȝoure trewe frendis olde & wyse / [2435] ȝe han I-clepid  
straunge folk. ȝonge folk. false flateris / & enemyis

reconsyled / & folk þat don 3ow reuerence *with-outyn*  
*loue* / [2436] And ek also 3e han erred / for 3e han  
 brouȝt with 3ow to 3oure conseyl: Ire. Coueytise. &  
 Hastifnesse. / [2437] the wheche thre thyngis been con-  
 traryous / to euery conseyl honeste & profitable / [2438] And  
 the whiche thre thyngis: 3e han not anientissed or destroyed  
 hem neythir in 3oure self ne in 3oure conseylourys / as 3e ouȝte  
 [2439] ¶ 3e han erred also for 3e han schewid to 3oure  
 conseylouris 3oure talent & 3oure affeccoun to makyn  
 werre anon & for to doon vengeance / [2440] they han  
 espied be 3oure wordis to what thyng 3e been enclyned /  
 [2441] & therefore han they conseylid 3ow rather to  
 3oure talent: than to 3oure profit [2442] ¶ 3e han errid  
 also / for it semyth that 3ow suffysith to han been con-  
 seylid by these conseylouris only / & with litil avis  
 [2443] where as in so greet & in so high a neede / it hadde  
 been necessarye / mo conseylouris / & moore deliberacioun /  
 to perforce 3oure emprise [2444] ¶ 3e han errid also ffor  
 3e han not examynyd / 3oure conseyl in the for seyde  
 manere / ne due maneere / as the caas requiryth [2445] ¶ 3e  
 han errid also for 3e han makid non deysioun / bytwixe  
 3oure conseylouris / [ . . . . .  
 . . . . . *no gap*] [2446] ne 3e ne haue  
 not knowe / the wil of 3oure trewe frendis olde & wyse /  
 [2447] but 3e han cast alle here wordys in an hoche pot /  
 & enclyned 3oure herte to the more part & to the  
 gettere noubere // And there been 3e condescendit /  
 [2448] & sith 3e wote weel that men schal 'alwey fynde a  
 gettere noubere of folys than of wise men / [2449] &  
 therefore in the conseylis that been at congregaciounys &  
 multitudis of folk there as men take more reward to the  
 nombre than to the sapience of personis / [2450] 3e seen weel  
 that in sweche conseylngis foolis han the maistrie [2451]  
**M**Elibeus answered agen & seyde I graunte wel that  
 I haue erryd / [2452] but there as thou hast told /  
 me heere be-forn / that he nys to blame that chaungith his con-



seyl in certeyn cas / & for certeyn Iuste causis  
 [2453] I am al redy to schaunge myn conseyllouris / ryȝt  
 as thow wolt deuyse / [2454] the prouerbe seyth that  
 for to do synne / is mannyssch / But certis to perseuere  
 longe therinne is werk of the deuyll [2455]

**T**O this centence answered anon Dame prudence /  
 & seyde // [2456] Examynyth quod sche ȝoure con-  
 seyl / & lat vs se the whiche of hem han spokyn  
 moost resonably & taught ȝow best conseyll // [2457]  
 And for as meche as the examynacioun is necessarie /  
 lat vs begynne at the Surgens / & at the phisiciens / that  
 fyrst spekyn in this matyere / [2458] I seye ȝow that the  
 surgeens & phisiciens han seyde ȝow in ȝoure conseyll  
 descretly as hem ouȝte / [2459] & in here space  
 seydyn ful wysely / that to the offyse of hem aperteynyth to  
 doon to euery wyȝt honour & profyt / & no wyȝt  
 to anoyen [2460] & after here craft to don greet diligence  
 vnto the cure of hem whiche that they han in here gouern-  
 aunce / [2461] And sire ryȝt as they han answerid  
 wisely & descretly / [2462] ryȝt so rede I that they  
 been heylly & souereynly gwerdounnyd for here noble  
 speche / [2463] And ek for they schuldyn don the moore  
 ententif besynesse in the curacioun of thyn doughtyr deere /  
 [2464] for al be it so / that they been ȝoure frendis /  
 therfore schal ȝe nat sufferyn that they serve ȝow for  
 naught [2465] but ȝe oughtyn rathere gwerdounnyu hem &  
 schewyn hem ȝoure largesse / [2466] And as touchynge the  
 prepociacioun whiche the phisiciounys encresedyn in this  
 cas / this is to seyne / [2467] that in maladyis / that on  
 contrarye is war<sup>l</sup>chid by a-nothir contrarye / [2468] I  
 wolde fayn knowyn how ȝe vndyrstonde thilke text / &  
 what is ȝoure sentence. [2469] Certis quod Melibeus I  
 vndirstonde it in this wise / [2470] that ryȝt as they han  
 don. a contrarye ryȝt so schulde I doon hem a-nothir /  
 [2471] ffor ryȝt as they han vengede hem on me / &  
 don me wrong: ryȝt so schal I wengyn me vp-on hem



& doon hem wrong / [2472] And thanne haue I cured on  
contrarye by a-nothir [2473]

**L**O lo quod Dame Prudence how lyztely is euery  
man enclyned to his owene desyr / & to his owene  
plesaunce / [2474] Certis quod see the wordis of the  
phisiciens ne schuldyn not han been vndyrstondyn in this  
wise / [2475] for certis wikkedenesse is not contrarye  
to wikkedenesse / ne vengeaunce to vengeaunce / ne wrong  
to wrong / but [*sont semblables* [2476] *Et pour*  
*ce, vengeance par vengeance, ne injure*  
*par injure, n'est pas curé,* [2477] *mais*]  
euerich of hem eneresith & morith othir // [2478]  
But certis the wordis of the phisiciens / schuldyn ben  
vndirstondyn in this wise / [2479] ffor good & wekede-  
nesse been two contraryis / & pees.& werre / & venge-  
aunce & sufferraunce / discord & acord / and manye  
othere thyngis / [2480] But certis wikkedenesse: may been  
waryschid by goodnesse discord: by acord / werre: by pees /  
& so forth of othere thyngis // [2481] And heereto a-cordyth  
seynt Poule the apostelle in manye placis [2482] he  
seyth / Ne 3ildith not harm for harm / ne wikkede speche  
for wikkede speche / [2483] but doth weel to hym that doth  
the harm / And blysse hym that seyth to the harm / [2484]  
& in manye othere placis he amonestyth pees &  
accord / [2485] But now wele I spekyn to 3ow of the con-  
seyl that was 3ouyn to 3ow of the meen of lawe /  
and the wise folk [2486] that seydyn alle by on acord /  
as 3e han herd by-fore / [2487] That ouer alle thyng 3e  
schal don 3oure diligence to kepyn 3oure persone &  
to warnestore 3oure hous / [2488] and seydyn also that  
in this caas 3e oughtyn for to werkyn ful a-visely / &  
with greet delib[er]acioun / [2489] And sere as to the fyrste  
poynt that touchith to the kepyng of 3oure persone /  
[2490] 3e schul vndyrstonde that he that hath werre schal  
eueremore deuoutely & meekely preyen <sup>1</sup> before alle  
thyng [2491] that Ihesu cryst of his mercy / wele

han hym in hise protexioun / & ben his souereyn helpynge  
 at hise neede / [2492] for certys in this world / there is no  
 wyȝt that may been conseyled ne kept sufficiencyntly / with-  
 outyn the keping of oure lord Ihesu Cryst / [2493] To this  
 centence acordyth þ<sup>e</sup> prophete dauid / that seyth / [2494]  
 If god ne kepe the cete. In idyl. wake he that kepeth  
 [2495] ¶ Now sere thanne schul ȝe commytte the keypyng of  
 ȝoure persone to ȝoure trewe frendis that been aprouyd  
 & I-knowe / [2496] & of hem schul ȝe axen helpe ȝoure  
 persone for to kepe ¶ ffor catoūn seyth / ȝif thu hast  
 nede of helpe: axe it of thynne frendis / [2497] ffor there ne  
 is noon so good a phisicien as thyn trewe frend / [2498]  
 And aftyr this thanne schul ȝe kepe ȝow ffrom alle  
 straunge folk and from lyeris / and haue alwey in suspekt /  
 hire compaynye / [2499] ffor pers Alphonse seyth Ne  
 take no compaignye by the weye of a strāng man but ȝif it  
 be so that thou haue knowyn hym by a long tyme befor /  
 [2500] & ȝif so be that he falle / in-to thyn cumpanye per-  
 auntere with-outyn thyn assent / [2501] enquire thanne  
 as subtyly as thu mayst / of his conuersacioun / & of his lyf  
 be-fore / & feyne thyn weye / Sey that thou wel go thedyr  
 there that thou wilt not go / [2502] an ȝif he beryth a spere /  
 hold the on the ryȝt syde / & ȝif he bere a swerd /  
 hold the on the left syde [2503] ¶ And aftyr this  
 thanne schal ȝe kepe ȝow wisely from alle sweche manere  
 peple / as I haue seyde be-fore / And hem & here conseil  
 eschewe / [2504] And aftyr this thanne schal ȝe kepyn ȝow  
 in swich maner / [2505] that for ony presumpcioun of ȝoure  
 strenthe / that ȝe ne dispise / ne attempte not the  
 myȝte of ȝoure aduersarye / so lite that ȝe lete the  
 keypyng of ȝoure persone / for ȝoure presumpcioun / [2506]  
 for euery wise man dredyth his enemy / [2507] And  
 salomon seyth / Weleful is he that of alle thynges hath drede /  
 [2508] ffor certys he that þour the hardynesse of his  
 herte or thorw the hardynesse of hym-self / hath to  
 greet presumpcioun / hym schal euele betyde / [2509] Thanne

schal 3e eueremoore countre wayte embusschement; / &  
 espiait // [2510] for Seneca seyth / that the wise man  
 that dredith harmys / eschewith harmys / [2511] ne <sup>1</sup>he ne  
 fallyth in-to perilyis / that perilis eschewyth / [2512] And al-  
 be-it so / that it seeme that thow art in sekyr place / 3it  
 schalt thow alwey doon diligence in kepyng of thyn persone /  
 [2513] this is to seyn ne be not necligent to keepen thyn  
 persone / not only for thynne gretteste enemyis / but from  
 thyn leste enemye / [2514] Seneca seyth / a man / that is  
 weel auysed / he dredyth his leste enemye // [2515] Ouyde  
 seith / that the litelle wesele / wele sle the grette bole & the  
 wilde hert // [2516] And the book seyth that the lytil thorn  
 may pryke a kyng wol sore / & an hound wele  
 holde the wyld boor / [2517] But natheles I sey nat þat  
 thow schat been so coward that thow doute there wheere-as is  
 no drede / [2518] The book seyth / that sum folk han  
 greet lust / to disseyue; but 3it they dredyn hem to been dis-  
 seyuyd / [2519] 3it schalt thow drede to ben enpoysounnyd /  
 And keepe the from the cumpaygnye of skornerys / [2520]  
 ffor the book seyth / woth skornerys make no compaignye /  
 but fle here wordys as venym /

[2521] Now as to the secunde poynt / wheere-as 3oure  
 wise conseylourys / conseylede 3ow to warnestore / 3oure hous  
 with greet diligence / [2522] I wolde knowe how that 3e  
 vndyrstande / thilke wordis & what is 3oure sentence [2523]

**M**ELibeus answerede & seyde / certis I vndyrstonde  
 it in this wyse / That I schal warnestore myn hous /  
 with touris & sweche as han casteH & othere manere  
 edifices & armure and artelleryes / [2524] by whiche  
 thyngis I may myn persone & myn hous so kepyn &  
 defendyn / that myne enemyis schul been in drede myn  
 hous for to aprochyn [2525]

**T**O this sentence answerede anon Prudence // warne-  
 storynge is quod sche of heye tourys & of grette edifices /  
 [appertaining *aucune ffois a orgueil* [2526] *apres on  
 fait les tours et les grans edifices* (MS Reg. 19 C vii, lf 133, bk)]

with greete costagis & with greete trauayle / And whan that  
they been accomplesed / ȝit be they not worth a stre but if they  
been defendit by trewe frendys that been olde & wyse // [2527]  
And vndyrstonde weel that the gretteste & the strengeste  
garnesoun that a ryche man may han / as weel to kepyn his  
persone <sup>1</sup>as hese goodis / is [2528] that he be belouyd with  
hise subiectis. And with hise neigheboris / [2529] ffor thus  
seyth thullyus that there is a manere garnesoun / that no  
man may venquische / Ne desconfite / & that is [2530] a  
lord to been belouyd / of hise citesynys & of his peple [2531]

**N**OW sere as to the thredde poynt wheer - as  
ȝoure olde & wise conseylouris / seydyn that ȝow ne  
ouȝtyn / not sodeynly ne not to hastify procedyn in  
this neede / [2532] But that ȝow ouȝtyn purueyen / & appar-  
aylyn ȝow / in this cas / with greet diligence / & greet delyber-  
acioun / [2533] trewely I trowe that they seydyn / ryȝt wisely  
& ryȝt soth / [2534] for tullyus seyth in euery  
neede / er thow begynne it / apparayle the with gret  
diligence / [2535] Thanne seye I that in vengeaunce  
takyng in werre / in batayle / & in warnestoryng /  
[2536] er thow begynne I reede / that thow apparayle the  
not therto & do it with greet dyligence & greet deliberacioun //  
[2537] ffor Thullyus seyth that longe apparaylynge / by-for-  
n<sup>e</sup> batayle / makyt schort victorie [2538] ¶ And Cassiodorus  
seyth The garnesoun is strongere whan it is longe tyme auysed

**B**UT now lat vs spekyn of the conseyl / that was  
acordit be ȝoure neigheboris / Sweche as doon ȝow  
reuerence with-outyn loue / [2540] ȝoure olde enenyis  
reconsyld / ȝoure flatereris [2541] that conseyledyn ȝow cer-  
teyn thyngis pryuyly / & opynly conseyledyn ȝow / the  
contrarye / [2542] The ȝonge folk also that conseylede  
ȝow / to venge ȝow & make werre a-noon [2543] And  
certis sere as I haue seyde be-for<sup>n</sup> ȝe han greetly errid /  
to han clepid / swich manere folk to ȝoure conseil [2544]  
whiche conseylouris / been I-nowgh repreuyd / be the resonys  
a-fore-seyd / [2545] but natheles lat vs now dessende to



the special // 3e schul fyrst procedyn / aftyr the doctrine / of  
 thullius / [2546] Certis the trouthe of this matire or of  
 this conseyll / nedyth not diligently enquire [2547] for it  
 is weel wist whiche they been that han don to 3ow this  
 trespas / and vilenye / [2548] and how manye trespasouris /  
 and in what manere they han doon to 3ow al this  
 wrong & al this vilenye // [2549] And aftyr this  
 3e <sup>1</sup>schuln examyne al the secunde condicioun whiche  
 þat the same thullyus addyth in this mateere / [2550] ffor  
 tullius put a thyng whiche that he clepith consentynge / This  
 is to seyne / [2551] who been they / & whiche  
 been they / and how manye been they / & whiche  
 been thei that consentedyn to 3oure aduersaryis /  
 [2552] [*et considérons aussi qui sont ceulx, et quans,  
 qui se consentent à tes adversaires. (Le Mén. i. 211.)*] [2553]  
 And certis as to the fyrste poynt / it is weel knowyn whiche  
 folk been they / that consentedyn to 3oure hastif wilful-  
 nesse / [2554] ffor trewely alle tho that consentede 3ow  
 to makyn sodeyn werre / ne been not 3oure frendis / [2555]  
 lat vs now considere [*qui tu es et*] whiche been they that  
 3e holdyn 3owre frendis / as to 3oure persone [2556] ffor  
 al be it so / that 3e been myghty & ryche / Certis 3e ne  
 been but a-loone / [2557] for certis 3e ne han no child  
 but a douȝtyr / [2558] ne 3e ne han breteren ne cosyns  
 germayns / ne noon othir nygh kenrede [2559] wherefore  
 that 3oure enemyis / for drede schulde stynte to plede / with  
 3ow or distroye 3oure persone / [2560] 3e knowyn  
 also that 3oure rychesse mote been despendit in  
 dyuerce partis / [2561] and whan that euery wigh hath  
 his part / they ne wele takyn but lityl reward to vengyn  
 thyn deth // [2562] But thynne enemyis been thre and  
 they han manye childeryn / bretheryn cosyns & othere nygh  
 kenrede / [2563] and thow so weere / thow hadyst  
 slayn of hem two or thre / 3et dwellyn þere I-nowe to wrekyng  
 here deth / & to sle tyn persone / [2564] & thow so  
 be that 3oure kynreede / be moore sekyl & stefast / than



the kenreede of 3oure aduersarye / [2565] 3et natheles / 3oure  
kenrede nys but a fer kynrede they been but lytil sibbe  
to 3ow / [2566] and the kyn of 3oure enenyis been nygh sibbe  
to hem / & certis as in þat heere condicioun is betere than  
is 3ourys // [2567] Tanne lat vs considere also / if the  
conseylynge of hem that conseyledyn / 3ow to takyn sodeyn  
vengeauns / whethir it acorded to resoun or no / [2568] And  
certis 3e knowe wel nay / [2569] for as be ryzt & resoun /  
there may no man ta<sup>l</sup>kyn venieaunce on no wight but the  
Iuge that hath the Iurysdixioun of it / [2570] whanne it is  
I-grauntid / to take thilke vengeaunce / hastily or at-  
temprelly as the lawe requyrith / [2571] & 3it moore  
ouyr / of thilke word that Thullius clepith consentynge  
[2572] thow schalt considered 3if thyn myzt & thyn power /  
may consente & suffise / to thyn wilfulnesse / & to thynne  
conseyLOURys [2573] and sertis thow mayst weel seyn  
þat nay / [2574] ffor sekirly as for to spekyn proprely.  
we may doon nothyng but only swich thyng as we may  
don it rihtfully / [2575] & certis ryztfully may 3e  
take no venieaunce / as of 3oure propre autorite [2576]  
thanne may 3e seen / that 3oure power ne consentith  
nat ne acordith nat with 3oure wilfulnesse [2577] ¶ Lat  
vs now examyne the thredde poynt that / Thullius clepith  
consequent / [2578] Thow schalt vndyrstonde / that the  
vengeaunce that thow purposeth for to take is the conse-  
quent / [2579] And therof folwith a-nothir uengeau[n]s /  
peril & werre & othere vengeaunce & damagis with-outyn  
nombere / of whiche we been not war as at this tyme //  
[2580] And as touchynge the / fourte poynt / That Thullius  
clepith engenderynge / [2581] thow schalt considere that  
this wrong whiche that is doon to the<sup>e</sup> is engenderyd / of  
the hate of thynne enemyis / [2582] & of the vengeaunce  
takyng<sup>e</sup> vp-on that / wolde engendere a-nothir / vengeaunce .  
And meche sorwe / in wastynge of rychessis as I seyde

[2583] ¶ Now sere as to the poynt that tullius  
clepith causes / with that is the laste poynt / [2584] thow

schalt vndirstonde / that the wrong that thow hast rescceyuid  
 hath certeyn causes / [2585] whiche that clerkis clepyng  
 Oriens / & efficiens / And Causa longinqua / & Causa  
 Propinqua / this is to seyne the ffer cause / & the nygh  
 cause / [2586] the fer cause is almyghti god / that is  
 cause of alle thyngis / [2587] the nygh cause is thynne  
 thre enemyis / [2588] the cause accidental was hate /  
 [2589] the cause material: been the fyue woundis of  
 thyn doughtre [2590] The cause formal is the manere of  
 here werkynge / that brougtyng ladderys & clombyn in at  
 thyne wyndowis / [2591] the cause final was for to sle thyn  
 dougtyr / It lettede nat in as meche as in hem<sup>1</sup> was // [2592]  
 But for to spekyn of the ferthe cause as to what ende they  
 schul come / or what schal finally betyde of hem in this  
 caas / ne can I nat deeme / but be coniectynge & by  
 supposynge [2593] for we schul suppose / that they schul  
 come to a wekkede ende / [2594] bi-cause that the bok of  
 Decreis seyth / Selde or with greet payne been causis I-brougt  
 to a good ende / Whan they been baldely begunne [2595]

**N**ow sere ȝif meen wolde axsyn me whi that god  
 sufferede / men to doon ȝow this veleny certis I can-  
 not weel answeryn as for no Sothfastnesse / [2596] for  
 thapostelle seyth that the sciencis & the iugementis of  
 oure lord god / almyȝty: been ful deepe / [2597] there may  
 no man comprehende / ne serchyn hem sufficiently [2598]  
 ¶ Natheles / bi certeyn presumpciounys / & coneytyngis  
 I holde & bileue / [2599] that god whiche that is ful of  
 iustise / & of ryghtwisnesse hath suffered this betyde by  
 iuste cause / resonable

[2600] Thyn name is Melibee this is to seyne a man /  
 that drynkyth hony / [2601] or he that hath I-dronkyn  
 hony / so meche of sweete temperel riches & delis of  
 honouris of this world [2602] that thow art dronkyn / &  
 hast forgetyn Ihesu cryst thyn creature / [2603] thow ne  
 hast nat doon to hym swich honour & reuerence / as the  
 ouȝte [2604] ne thow ne hast not weel takyn keep to

the wordis of Ouide that seyth [2605] vndyr the hony  
of the goodis / of the body is hid the venym that sleth  
the soule / [2606] And salomon seyth 3if thou hast  
foundyn hony / ete of it that suffyseth / [2607] ffor 3if thou  
ete of it out of mesure / thou schalt spewe / & been nedy /  
& poure / [2608] & peraventure / cryst hat the in  
dispyt and hath turnede away from the hys face & hise  
eeris of mysericorde / [2609] And also he hath sufferede /  
that thou hast been ponyschid / in the manere that thou  
hast trespassed / [2610] Thou hast doon synne a-geyn  
oure lord Ihesu cryst / [2611] ffor certis the thre enemyis /  
of mankynde that is to seyne / the flesh the feend & the  
world / [2612] thou hast suffred hem to entre in-to thyn  
herte wilfulli by the wyndowys / of thyn body / [2613] &  
hast not defendit thyn self sufficiantly a-geyn here assautis /  
& here temptaciouns So that they han woundede thyn  
soule in fyue placis [2614] this is to seyne: the dedly  
synnys that been entered in-to thyn herte / by thynne fyue  
wittis / [2615] And in the same manere / oure lord crist  
hath wold & suffered that thyne .iiij. enemyis been entrede  
in-to thyn hous by the wyndowys [2616] And han  
I-wounded thynne dou3tyr / in the forseide manere / [2617]

**C**ertis quod Melibee I se wel that 3e enforce  
3ow mechel by wordis to ouyrcome me in swich  
manere: that I schal nat venge me of myne enemyis / [2618]  
Schewynge me the perilis & the eueH that my3tyn fallyn  
of this vengeance // [2619] But who so wolde considere /  
in alle vengeanceis the perilis & the yuyllys that my3te sewe  
of vengeance takynge / [2620] a man wolde neuere take  
vengeance / & that were harm / [2621] for by the venge-  
aunce takynge: been the wikkede men disseuered from the  
goode men / [2622] And thei that han wil to doon wikkede-  
nesse: restreyne here wikkede purpos / whan they seen the  
ponyschyng & the chastisyng of the trespasourys / [2623]

**A**d ce respont dame prudence Certes dist elle Ie te  
otroie que de vengeance vient moult de biens

[2624] *Mais faire vengeance n'appartient pas a vn chascun  
fors aux iuges / Et a ceulz qui ont les iuridicions  
sur les malfauteurs* (MS Reg. 19 C xi, leaf 59, back, col. 2.)

[2625] And ȝit seye I moore / that ryȝt as a senguler  
persone synnyth in takynge vengeance / of a-nothir man :

[2626] righ so synnyth the Iuge ȝif he do no vengeance /  
of hem that it han deseruyd / [2627] for Senek seyth /

that maystir is good that preuyth schrewis / [2628]

And as Cassiodere seyth / A man dredith to doon  
outrages / whan he wot & knowith that it displeseth to the

Iugis / & to the souereynys / [2629] And a-nother seyth /

The Iuge that dredith to doon ryȝt : makyth men schrewis //

[2630] And seynt poule thapostelle seyth in his epistelle /  
whan he wrythith vnto the romaynys / that the Iuges berith

not the spere / with-outyn cause : [2631] but they beryn it

to ponysche þe schrewis & mysdoerys / & for to defendyn

the Goode men [2632] ȝif ȝe wele than<sup>ne</sup> take vengeance

of ȝoure enemyis / ȝe schul returne or haue ȝoure recours /

to the Iuge that hath the Iurisdiccoun / vp-on hem / [2633] &

he schal punyschyn hem as the lawe axit & requirith [2634]

**A** quod Melibee this vengeance likyth me nothyng /

[2635] I bethynke me now & take heed how

fortune hath norichid me / from myn chyldeheede /

& hath holpyn me to passyn manye a strong paas / [2636]

now wele I assayen hire trowynge with godis helpe / that

sche schal helpyn me myn schame for to venge [2637]

**C** Ertis quod Prudence / If ȝe wele werke by myn con-

seyl / ȝe schul not assaye fortune by no way / [2638] ne

ȝe schul not lene / or bowe / on to here after the word

of senek / [2639] for thyngis that been folylly doon / & that

been doon in hope of fortune / schuln neuere been brouȝt to

good ende / [2640] And as the same Senek seyth / the moore

cleer & the more schynynge that fortune is : the moore

bretil & the sunnere brokyn sche is / [2641] truste nat

in here for sche nys nat stedefast ne stable / [2642] ffor

whan thow trowist to been most sekyr or sewir of hire



helpe: sche wele fayle & disseyue the / [2643] And  
 where as 3e seyn that Fortune hath norichid 3oure  
 childheede [2644] I seye that in so meche schul 3e  
 the lasse truste in here wit / [2645] For senek  
 seyth / what man that is norichid by ffortune: sche makyth  
 hym a greet fool / [2646] Now thanne syn 3e desyre  
 & aske vengeance / & the vengeance that is doon aftyr  
 the lawe / & by-fore the Iuge / ne likyth 3ow nat [2647]  
 And the vengeance that is doon in hope of fortune is perli-  
 ous & vncerteyn / [2648] thanne haue 3e noon othir  
 remedie / but for to haue 3oure recours / vn-to the souereyn  
 Iuge that vengith alle vilanyis / & wrongis / [2649]  
 & he schal venge 3ow aftyr / that hym self witnessith  
 where as he seyth / [2650] leuyth the vengeance ¶ to me  
 & I schal doon it [2651]

**M**Elibie answerede / If I ne venge me not of the  
 vilanye that men doon to me / [2652] I somoun or  
<sup>1</sup>warne hem that han doon to me that vilenye & alle  
 othere to doon to me a-nothir vilenye / [2653] for it is wretyn /  
 3if thou take ne vengeance of an opyn vilanye / thou somoun-  
 yst thynne aduersaryis: to do the a newe velanye [2654]  
 And also for myn sufferaunce men woldyn do me so  
 meche vilenye / that I ne myghte neythir beere it ne sus-  
 teene / [2655] & so schulde I bee put & holdyn ouyr  
 lowe / [2656] ffor men seyn in meche sufferynge schal  
 manye thyngis falle vn-to the whiche thou schalt nat  
 mowe suffere [2657]

**C**Ertis quod .prudence. I graunte now that ouyr  
 meche sufferaunce / is nat good [2658] But 3it ne  
 folwith it not therof / that euery persone to whom men  
 doon vilenye: tak of it vengeance / [2659] for that aper-  
 tenyth & longith al only to the Iugis / for they schul  
 venge / the vilanyis & the Iniurijs / [2660] And therefore  
 to two autoriteis / that 3e han seyde a-bouyn / been only  
 vndyrstondyn In the Iugis / [2661] For whan they sufferyn  
 ouermeche the wrongis & vilenyis to been doon



with-outyn punyschyng [2662] they somone nat a man al  
only for to doon newe wrongis / but they comaundyn it /  
[2663] also a wys man seyth / that the Iuge that cor-  
rectith nat the synnere comaundyth / & biddyth hym to do  
synne / [2664] & the Iugis & souereynys / myztyn in  
here land so meche suffere of the schrewis & mysdoerys :  
[2665] that they schuldyn by swich sufferauce / by processe  
of tyme / waxen of swich poweer & myzt / that they schuldyn  
puttyn out / the Iugis & the souereynys from here placis  
[2666] & at the laste makyn hem to lesyn here lordschepe //

[2667] But lat vs now putte that ye han leue to  
vengen 3ow / [2668] I seye 3e been nat of myzt &  
power as now to venge 3ow / [2669] ffor 3if 3e wele make  
comparisoun vn-to þ<sup>e</sup> myzt of 3oure aduersaryis / 3e schul  
fynde in manye thyngis that I haue schewid 3ow er this /  
that hire condicioun is bettere than 3oures [2670] &  
therefore seye I that it is good / as now / that 3e suffere &  
been pacient

[2671] Fertheremore 3e knowe wel / that aftyr the  
comu'ne sawe. it is a woodnesse a man to stryue with a  
strongere / or a moore myzty man / than he is hym selue /  
[2672] & for to stryue with a man of euene strenthe /  
that is to seyne with as strong a man as he is hymself / it is  
peril / [2673] And for to stryue with a weykere man : it is  
folye / [2674] & therfore schulde a man fle stryuyng / as  
meche as he myzte // [2675] ffor Salomon seyth it is a  
greet worschepe / to a man to kepyn hym from noyse / &  
stryf. [2676] & If it so befaller or happe / that a man be  
of grettere myzt & strenthe / than thow art / do the  
greuauce / [2677] stodye & besye the rather to styll  
the same greuauce : than to venge the / [2678] ffor  
senek seyth / that he puttith hym in greet peryl / that  
stryuyth with a grettere man than he is hym self / [2679]  
And catoun seyth // If a man of heyere staat or degre or  
moore myzt than thow / do the ony noye or greuauce /  
suffere hym / [2680] ffor he that onys hath greuyd the /

mai a-nothir tyme releue the & helpe // [2681] 3it  
 sette I caas 3e han bothe a lycence / for to  
 venge 3ow / [2682] I seye that theree been ful manye  
 thyngis / that schul restreyne 3ow of vengeaunce takynge /  
 [2683] & make 3ow for to enclyne to sufferre & for  
 to han pacience / in the wrongis that han been don to  
 3ow / [2684] fferst & foreward 3if 3e wele / considere  
 the defautis / [ . . . . . [2685]  
 . . . . . *no gap*] god hath suffered 3ow to haue this  
 tribulacioun / as I haue seyde 3ow heere byfore / [2686] For  
 the Poete seyth that we ou3tyn paciently / takyn the tribu-  
 laciounys that comyn to vs whan that we thynkyn & con-  
 sideryn that we han deseruyd to han hem [2687] ¶ Andseynt  
 Gregorie seyth that whan a man considerith weel the  
 noumbere of hise defautis & of hise synnys / [2688] the  
 peynys & the tribulaciounys that he sufferyth semyn the  
 lasse vnto hym / [2689] And in as meche as hym sem-  
 yth his synne is moore heuy / & greuous [2690] in so  
 meche semyth his peyne the ly3tere & the esiere vnto  
 hym // [2691] Also 3e owyn to encline / & bowe 3oure  
 herte to 'take the pacience' of oure lord Ihesu cryst / as  
 seyth seynt petyr / In hise episteles / [2692] Ihesu Crist he  
 seith hath suffered for vs / & 3euyyn ensample to euery  
 man to folwe / & sewyn hym / [2693] for he dede neuere  
 synne ne neuere cam there / A vileyns word out of his  
 mouth [2694] whan men cursede hym: he cursede hem  
 not / [ . . . . . *no gap*  
*in the MS.*] [2695] Also the greete pacience / whiche  
 seyntis that been in paradys han had in tribulaciounys / that  
 they been I-sufferid with-outyn here desert or gilt / [2696]  
 oughte meche stere 3ow to pacience / [2697] Ferthere  
 more 3e schul enforse 3ow to haue pacience / [2698]  
 considerynge that the tribulaciounys / of this world but  
 lityl while endure / & soone passede been & goone /  
 [2699] And the Ioye that a man sekyth for to han bi  
 pacience in trybulaciounys / is perdurable / aftyr that

[<sup>2</sup> MS repeats  
the pacience]

thapostele seyth in his epistele [2700] ¶ The Ioye of God  
 is *perdurable* that is to seyne euere lastynge / [2701]  
 Also trowith & bileuyth stedefastly / that he nys not  
 weel I-noryschid / ne weel I-tau3t that can not haue pacience /  
 or wele not receyue pacyence / [2702] For salomon seyth /  
 that the doctryne & the wit of a man is knowyn by  
 pacience / [2703] And in a-nothir place he seyth that he  
 that is pacient gouernyth hym by greet prudence / [2704]  
 And the same Salomon seyth / That the angry & the wraatheful  
 man: makyth noysis / & the pacient man attempereth  
 hym & stillith / [2705] he seyth also it is moore  
 worth to ben pacient: than for to ben ry3t strong / [2706]  
 And he that may haue the lordschepe of hese owene herte:  
 he is moore to preyse / than he that by his force or strenthe:  
 takyth greete ceteis [2707] And therefore seyth seynt  
 Iame In his epistle / that Pacience is a greet vertu of  
*perfeccioun*. [2708]

**C**ertis quod Melibee I graunte 3ow dame Prudence /  
 that Pacience is a greet vertu of *perfeccioun* [2709]  
 But every man may not han the *perfeccioun* that 3e  
 seekyn / [2710] ne I am not of the noumbre of ry3t *per-*  
*fite* men / [2711] For myn herte may neuere been in  
 pees / vnto the tyme it be ven<sup>l</sup>git / [2712] And al be it so /  
 that it was greet peril to mynne enemyis to doon me a  
 vilenye / in takynge vengeaunce vp-on me: [2713] 3it  
 take they noon heede at the peril / but fulfilledyn here  
 wekede wil / & here corage / [2714] & therfore me  
 thynkyth men ou3te nat repreue me thogh I putte me  
 in a lityl peril / For to vengyn me / [2715] And thow I do  
 a greet excesse / that is to seyne that I venge oon outrage /  
 by a-nothir. [2716]

**A** quod dame Prudence / 3e seyn 3oure wil & As 3ow  
 likyth / [2717] but in noo cas of the world a man  
 schulde nat doon outrage ne excres. ffor to vengyn  
 hym / [2718] For Cassiodere seyth / that as euele doth  
 he that vengith hym by outrage: as he that doth the

outrage / [2719] And therefore 3e schul venge 3ow! after  
 the ordere of ry3t / that is to seyne by the lawe / & nat  
 by excesse / ne by outrage [2720] And also 3if 3e wele  
 venge 3ow / of the outrage of 3oure aduersarijs in othere  
 maneere than ry3t comaundyth / 3e synnyn [2721] &  
 therfore seyth Senek / that a man schal neuere venge  
 schrewedenesse by schrewedenesse / [2722] & 3if 3e seyn  
 that ry3t axeth a man to defende violence / [ . . . . . ]  
 & fy3tynge. By fytynge [2723] certis 3e seyn soth /  
 whan the defence is doon a-noon with-outyn interual or  
 with-outyn tarynge or delay [2724] for to defende hym!  
 & not for to venge hym / [2725] And it behouth  
 that a man putte swich attemperaunce in his defence /  
 [2726] that men haue no cause / ne matere to repreuyn  
 hym! that defendyth hym from excesse & outrage / for ellis  
 weere it a-geyn resoun / [2727] ¶ Parde 3e knowyn weel  
 that 3e makyn no defence / as now for to defende 3ow!  
 but for to venge 3ow / [2728] And so sewith it that 3e  
 han no wil / to doon 3oure deede atemperelly / [2729] And  
 therfore me thynkyth / that Pacience is good ffor Salomon  
 seyth / that he that is not pacient! schal haue greet  
 harm [2730]

**C**ertis quod Melibee I graunte 3ow that whan a man  
 is impacient & wroth of that that touchith hym /  
 not / & that apertenyth 'nat vn-to hym! thow it  
 harme hym it is no wondyr / [2731] for the lawe seyth  
 that he is coupable that entyrmeth or medelyth with  
 swich thyng / as apertenyth nat vn-to hym [2732] ¶ And  
 Salomon seith that he that entirmetyth hym of the  
 noyse of stryf / of a-nothir man / is lyk to hym that takith  
 an hound bi the eris / [2733] For ry3t as he that takith  
 a strong hound bi the eris! is othirwhile betyn with  
 the hound / [2734] Ry3t in the same wise is it resoun that  
 he haue harm that by his enpacience medelyth hymself bi  
 the noyse of a-nothir man where as it aperteynyth not vn-to  
 hym / [2735] But 3e knowyn weel that this deede that



is to seyne / myn greef & myn deseese touchith me ryȝt  
 now / [2736] And therfore thow I be wroth & in-  
 pacient: it is no meruayle // [2737] And sauynge ȝoure  
 grace / I can not seen that it myȝte greetly harme me  
 thow I tok vengeance [2738] ffor I am richere &  
 moore myȝty than myne enemy is been // [2739] And weel  
 knowe ȝe that by monee & by hauynge / greete posses-  
 siouns been alle thyngis of this world / gouernyd [2740]  
 ¶ And salomon seith That alle these thyngis obeye to  
 monye . [2741]

**W**Hanne Prudence hadde herd these wordis of hire  
 hosisbonde how he auainted hym of hese richesse /  
 and of hise mene / dispreysynge the poweer / of hise  
 aduersaryis / sche spak & seyde in this wyse / [2742] Certis  
 deere sere / I graunte ȝow that ȝe been riche / & myghty /  
 [2743] & that the richessis been goode to hem / that han weel  
 I-getyn hem and that weel curne vse hem // [2744] For rygh  
 as the body of a man may not leue with-outyn the soule: no  
 moore may it leue with-oute the temperel goodis / [2745] and  
 by richessis may a man getyn hym best frendis / [2746] And  
 therefore seyth Pamphilles ¶ If Auerthes doughtir he seyth  
 be ryche / Sche may chesen of a thousent men [ . . .  
 . . . . . [2747] . .  
*no gap in the MS.*] / oon wele not forsakyn hyre ne refusyn  
 hire / [2748] And this Pamphiles seith also / If thow be  
 ryȝt happy / that is to seyne / If <sup>1</sup>thow be ryȝt ryche / thow  
 schat fyndyn a greet noumbere of felawys & frendis / [2749]  
 And ȝif thyn fortune chonge Fare weel  
 freendschepe & felaweschepe / [2750] for thow schat been  
 a-loone / with-outyn ony cumpanye But if it be the  
 cumpanye of poore folk [2751] ¶ And ȝit seyth this  
 Pamphilles moore ouyr That they that been / boonde &  
 thralle / of linage schuln been made worthy & noble bi  
 the richesses [2752] & ryȝt so as by richessis theree  
 comyn manye goodys: ryȝt so by pouerte / comyn theree  
 manye harmys / & euellis / [2753] For greet pouerte: con-



streynyth a man to doon manye euellis / [2754] And th[e]r-  
fore clepith Cassiodere / pouerte the moodyr of ruine /  
[2755] that is to seyne the modyr of ouyrthrowynge or  
of fallynge down / [2756] And therrefore seyth Peers alfonce  
On of the gretteste aduersiteis of this world is [2757]  
whan a fre man by kynde / or of burthe is constreyned /  
bi pouerte / to ete te almesse / of hise enemy / [2758] &  
the same seyth Innocent in oon of hise bookis / he seith  
that sorweful & myshappi · is the condicioun of a poore  
beggere / [2759] for if he axe nat his meete / he dieth fore  
hungir / [2760] And 3if he axe / he dieth for ¶ schame /  
And algatis necescitee constreynyth hym to axe / [2761]  
And therfore seith Salomon / betere is it to deye than  
for to haue swich pouerte / [2762] And as the same Salo-  
mon seith Betere it is to deye of bittere deth : than for to  
leuyn in swich wyse / [2763] By these resonys that I  
haue seyð vn-to 3ow / & by manye othere resonys / that I  
coude seye / [2764] I graunte 3ow that richessis been  
goode to hem that hem getyn weel / And to hem that weel  
vsyn the rychessis / [2765] and therffore wele I schewe  
3ow how 3e schul haue 3ow in [*amassant les*  
(*Le Ménagier*, i. 222)] rychessis & in what maneere 3e schul  
vse hem /

[2766] Fyrst 3e schul geete hem with-outyn greet  
desyr / bi good leyseer / sokyngely but nat ouer hastyfely /  
[2767] For a man that is to desyrynge / to geete rychessis /  
abandonyth hym fyrst to thefte & to alle othere euyllis /  
[2768] And therfore seyth Salomon he that hastyth hym to  
busily to wexen ryche / he schal been noon innocent / [2769]  
he seyth also that the rychesse that hastily comyth to  
a man : soone awlyghtely goth & passith from a man /  
[2770] But that rychesse that comyth lityl & ly3til /  
wexeth alwey & multiplyeth / [2771] And sere 3e schul  
gete richessis by 3oure wit / & by 3oure trauayle / vn-to  
3oure profyt [2772] & that with-outyn wrong or harm  
doinge to ony othir persone / [2773] For the law

seyth / that there makyth no man hym ryche / 3if he do  
 harm to a-nothyr witht. [2774] this is to seyne / that  
 nature defendyth / & forbedyth by ryght / that no man  
 make hym self ryche: vn-to the harm of a-nothyr / persone.  
 [2775] And thullius seyth / that no sorwe ne no drede /  
 of deth ne nothing that may falle vn-to a man [2776]  
 is so meche ageyns nature: as a man to encrese his  
 owene profit / to the harm of a-nothir man / [2777] And thow  
 the greete men / & the my3ty men / getyn richessis / moore  
 ly3thely than thow / [2778] 3it schalt thu nat been ydyl ne  
 slow to don thyn profit ffor thow schalt in alle wise / fleen  
 ydilnesse / [2779] ffor Salomon seyth / that idilnesse techith  
 a man to doon manye euyllis / [2780] And the Same Salomon  
 seyth that he that trauaylith / & besijth hym to tilyin  
 his lond schal etyn breed / [2781] But he that is idyl &  
 castyth hym to no besynesse / ne ocupacioun schal falle in-to  
 pouerte / & deye for hungir / [2782] And he that is  
 ydil & slow / can neuere fyndyn conabele tyme for to  
 doon his profyt [2783] ffor there is a versefiour seyth / that  
 the ydele man excuseth hym in wyntyr bi cause of  
 greet cold / & in somyr by cause of the greete heete /  
 [2784] For these causes / seyth catoun wakyth & enclynyth  
 3ow nat ouyrmeche for to slepe / ffor ouyrmeche slep  
 causeth & norichith manye vicis [2785] And therfore  
 seyth seynt Ierome / doth some goode dedys / that the deuyl  
 whiche is oure enemy / ne fynde 3ow nat vn-ocupied /  
 [2786] For the deuyl takyth nat ly3tely vn-to hise werk-  
 ynge sweche as he fyndyth ocupied in goode werkis /

[2787] Thanne thus in getynge riches the  
 muste fleen Idilnesse / [2788] & afterward 3e schul vse  
 the rychesses / whiche 3e han getyn by 3oure wit And by  
 3oure trauayle / [2789] in swich manere that men  
 holdyn 13ow nat to scars ne to sparynge / ne fool large /  
 that is to seyne ouyr large a spendere / [2790] For ry3t as  
 men blamyn an auericious man / by cause of hise scarcite &  
 chyncherye: [2791] ry3t so / in the same wise / is he to blame

that spendyth ouyr largely / [2792] And therefore seyth  
 Catoun vse he seyth thynne richessis / that þ<sup>a</sup> hast getyn  
 [2793] in swich a maner / that men haue ne matier ne  
 cause to calle the neythir wreche ne chinchere / [2794]  
 ffor it is greet schame to a man to haue a poore herte  
 & a ryche purs [2795] he seyth also the goodis that  
 thow hast getyn / vse hem by mesure / that is to s[e]yne  
 spende mesurably / [2796] for they that folylly wastyn  
 & despendyn the goodis that they han / [2797] whan  
 they han no moore propere of here owene / they schapyn hem  
 to takyn the goodis of a-nothyr man [2798] ¶ I seye thanne  
 3e schul fleen aueryce [2799] vsynge 3oure richessis  
 in swich manere / that men seye nat that 3oure richessis  
 been I-buried / [2800] But that 3e haue hem in 3oure  
 myȝt & in 3oure weldynge // [2801] ffor a wys man  
 repreuyth the auericious man / & seyth thus in two  
 vers / [2802] Wherto & whi buryeth a man hise  
 goodis bi his greete aueryce / & knowyth weel that nedis  
 muste he deye / [2803] for deth is the ende of euery man  
 as in this present lyf / [2804] And for what cause & what  
 enchesoun / ioynyth he hym or knyttyth he hym / so faste  
 vnto hise goodis / [2805] that alle hise wittys moun nat  
 disseueren hym ne departyn hym from hise goodis /  
 [2806] & knowith weel or oughte to knowyn / that whan he  
 is deed he schal no thyng bere with hym / ouȝt of þis  
 world / [2807] And therefore seyth seynt Augustyn / that  
 the auarycious man is lykkened vn-to helle / [2808] that the  
 more it swolwith / the moode desyr it hath to swolwe / &  
 deuoure / [2809] And as weel as 3e wolde eschewe / to been  
 called an auerycious man / or chynche / [2810] as weel  
 schulde 3e keepe 3ow & gouerne 3ow in swich a wyse /  
 that men ne calle 3ow nat fool large / [2811] Therefore seyth  
 Tullius / the goodis he seyth of thyn hous schulde  
 not been kept <sup>1</sup>ne hid so cloos / But that they myȝtyn  
 been openyd bi pete & debonayerete / [2812] that is to  
 seyne to 3euyne hem part / that han greet neede / [2813]

Ne thynne goodis schulde not been so opyn / to been euery  
manys goodis [2814] ¶ Aftyrward in getyng of 3oure  
richesse & in vsynge hem / 3e schul alwey haue thre  
thyngis in 3oure herte / [2815] that is to seyne oure lord  
god Conciencie / And good name // [2816] ffyrst 3e schul  
haue god in 3oure herte / [2817] And for no rychesse 3e  
schul doon no thyng that schulde displese oure  
lord good / that is 3oure creature & makere / [2818] ffor aftyr  
the word of salomon / It is bettere to haue a lytil good with  
the loue of god [2819] than to haue meche good / & tresor And  
leese the loue of hise lord god / [2820] And the prophete  
seyth / that t[h]e moore prophit & the betere it is to been a  
good man / & haue lytil good & tresore: [2821] than to  
been heldyn a schrewe & haue greete rychessis [2822]  
And 3it seye I ferthere moore / that 3e schul alwey  
doon 3oure besynesse to gete 3ow rychessis [2823] so that  
3e gete hem with good concience // [2824] And thapostelle  
seyth / that there ne is thyng in this world of whiche 3e  
schulde haue so greet Ioye / as whan oure concience beryth  
vs witnesse / [2825] And the wise man seyth. The  
substaunce of a man is ful good / whan synne is not in  
mannys concience / [2826] Aftyrward in getyng of 3oure  
richessis / & in vsynge of hem [2827] 3ow muste haue  
greet besynesse / And greet dilligence / that 3oure goode  
name be alwey kept & conseruyd / [2828] ffor Salo-  
mon seyth that betere it is / & moore it a-vaylith a man  
to haue a good name than for to haue manye rych[e]ssis /  
[2829] And therefore he seyth in a-nothir place / Doo greet  
diligence seyth salomon in kepyng of thyn frend & of  
thyn goode name / [2830] for it schal longere a-bydyn / with  
the than only tresore be it neuere so precious / [2831]  
and certis he schulde nat been callid a gentil man that  
aftyr god & good concience / alle thyng left / ne doth  
his diligence / & bisynesse to kepyn his goode name //  
[2832] And Cassiodore seyth / That it is <sup>1</sup>signe of a gentil  
herte / whan a man louth & desiryth to haue a good name /



[2833] And therfore seyth seynt austyn / that there  
 been two thyngis that been necessarye & nedeful  
 [2834] & that is good Conciencie & good loos / [2835]  
 that is to seyne good conciencie to thyn owene parsonne /  
 In word and good los / for thyn neyghbore owtward /  
 [2836] And he that trustith hym so mechil in hise goode  
 conciencie / [2837] that he displesith & settyth at  
 nouzt / his goode name or los / & rekkith nat thow  
 he kepith nat his goode name / nys but a crewel cherl /

[2838] Sire now haue I schewid 3ow / how 3e schuldyn  
 doon to getyn rychessis / & how 3e schuldyn vsyn hem /  
 [2839] And I se weel that for the trust that 3e han in  
 3oure rychessis / 3e wele meue werre / & batayle [2840]  
 ¶ I conseyle 3ow that 3e begynne no werre in trust of  
 3oure rychessis / for they ne suffyse not / werrys to mayn-  
 tene / [2841] And therfore seyth a philysophere That  
 man that desyryth & wele algatis han werre / schal  
 neuere han suffisaunce / [2842] for the ryche that he is  
 the grettere dispencis wolde he makyn / 3if he wele haue wor-  
 schepe & victorie [2843] And Salomon seyth / that the  
 grettere rychessis that a man hath / the mo dispendouris / he  
 hath [2844] ¶ And deere sere / al be it so that for 3oure  
 rychessis / 3e mowe haue meche folk / [2845] 3it behouyth  
 it nat / ne it is nat good to bryngyn werre / where as 3e  
 mowe in othere manere haue pees / vn-to 3oure worschepe  
 & profyt / [2846] ffor the victorie of bataylis / that been  
 in this world / lyth not in grete nou[m]bre or multitude of  
 peple / ne in the vertew of man / [2847] but it lyth in  
 the wil & in the vertu of oure lord god / almighty /  
 [2848] & therfore Iudas / Machabeus / whiche was  
 goddis knygh / [2849] whanne he schulde fyghte a3en hyse  
 aduersaryis that a grettere noumbre & a grettere mul-  
 titude of puple of folk & was strongere / than was his puple of  
 Machabye / [2850] 3it he reconfortyth his lital cumpanye / &  
 seyde ryzt in this wise / [2851] Also lyghtely quod he  
 may oure lord god / almyghty 3eue victorie to a fewe folk :



as to manye folk / [2852]<sup>1</sup> for the victorie of batayle / comyth  
 not by the greete noumbre of peple [2853] but it comyth  
 from oure lord god / of heuene [2854] ¶ And deere sere for  
 as meche as there is no man / certeyn if it be worthi that  
 god 3eue hym victorie / [ . . . . .  
 . . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] or noght aftyr that  
 salomon seyth / [2855] therfore euery man / schulde greetly  
 drede werris / to begynne / [2856] And by cause that in  
 bataylis fallyn manye perilis / [2857] And happith othir-  
 while / that as soone as the greete man slayn as the lityl  
 man / [2858] And as it is I-wrefyn in the secunde book of  
 kyngis / the deedis of bataylis been auenturouse And no  
 thyng certeyn / [2859] for as lyztely is on hurt with a  
 spere as a-nothir / [2860] And for there is gret peril in  
 werre / therfore schulde a man fle & eschewe werre in  
 as meche as a man may goodly / [2861] ffor Salomon  
 seyth / he that louthyth peril / schal falle in peril / [2862]

**A**ftyr that Dame Prudence hadde spokyn in this  
 maneere / Melibee answered & seyde [2863] I se  
 weel dame prudence / that be 3oure fayre wordys and  
 by 3oure resonys / that 3e han schewede me / that the werre  
 lykyth 3ow no thyng / [2864] but I haue not 3it herd 3oure  
 conseyl / how I schal doon / in this neede [2865]

**C**ertis quod sche / I conseyle 3ow that 3e  
 acorde with 3oure aduersaryis / & that 3e han pees  
 with hem / [2866] ffor seynt Iame seyth / in hise  
 epistellis That by concord & pees / the smale rychchess waxen  
 greete / [2867] & by debat & discord / the greete richchess  
 fallyn down [2868] & 3e knowyn weel that on of the  
 grettteste / & most souereyn thyng that is in this world /  
 is vnytee & pees / [2869] and therfore seyde oure lord  
 Ihesu Crist to hise aposteH in this wyse / [2870] wol  
 happi & blyssede been they / that louyn & purchasyn  
 pees / for they been callede childeryn of god / [2871] **A** Quod  
 Melibee / Now se I that 3e louyn not myn honour /  
 ne myn worchepe / [2872] 3e knowyn weel that mynne

aduersaryis han begunne this debaat & brige / by here  
outrage [2873] & 3e seen weel that they ne requiryng ne  
preyen me nat of pees / ne they axsyn nat to been reconsylid /  
[2874] wele 3e thanne that I goo and meeke / me &  
obeye me to hem / & crye hem mercy / [2875] for sothe  
that weere nat myn worschepe / [2876] ffor ryȝt as men <sup>1</sup>seyn /  
that oure greete homelynesse / engenderyth dispresynge so  
faryth it / by too gret humilte or meeknesse [2877]

**T**hanne bygan Daame Prudence / to makyn sem-  
blaunt of wrethe & seyde [2878] Certis sire saue  
3oure grace / I loue 3oure honour & 3oure profyt as I do  
myn owene / & euere haue do / [2879] ne 3e ne noon  
othir seyen neuere the contrarye / [2880] And ȝit If I  
hadde seyde / that 3e schulde / han purchasyd / the pees &  
the reconsyliacyoun / I ne hadde nat meche mystake me /  
ne sayd a-mys // [2881] ffor the wise man seyth / The dis-  
sencioun begynnyth by a-nothir man / & the reconsylyng  
bygynnyth by thi self / [2882] And the prophete seyth  
fille schrewedenesse & do goodnesse / [2883] Seeke pees &  
folwe it in-asmeche as 3e may / [2884] ȝit seye I nat /  
that 3e schul rather / pursewe to 3oure aduersarye / for pees /  
than they schul to 3ow / [2885] ffor I knowe weel that 3e  
been so hard hertid / that 3e weele doon no thyng for me //  
[2886] And Salomon seyth / that he that hath ouyr hard an  
herte / that he at the laste schal myshappe or mystyde .

**W**hanne Melibee hadde herd dame Prudence makyn  
semblaunt / of wrathe / he seyde in this wise /  
[2888] Dame I preye 3ow that 3e been nat displesid /  
of thyngis that I seye / [2889] ffor 3e knowe weel / that I am  
angery & wroth / & that is no wondyr / [2890] & they that  
been wrothe / wetyn nat weel what they doon / ne what they  
seyn / [2891] Therfore the prophete seyth / that  
troublede eyen han no cleer syȝt / [2892] but seyth  
& consejlyth me / as 3ou lykyth / for I am redy to do /  
ryȝht as 3e wele desire / [2893] and ȝif 3e repreue me of myn  
folye / I am the moore holdyn for to loue 3ow & to preyse

3ow // [2894] ffor Salomon seyth / that he that repreuyth  
hym that doth folye [2895] he schal fynde grettere grace /  
than he that disseyuyth hym with sweete wordys / [2896]

**T**hanne seyde dame Prudence / I make no semblaund /  
of wrathe ne of angir: but for 3oure greete profyth /  
[2897] ffor Salomon seyth he is more worth / that re-  
preuyth or chydyth / a fool for hise folyee / schewynge hym  
semelaunt of wrethe: [2898] than he that support[it]h hym /  
& preysith hym in his mysdoinge. <sup>1</sup>and laught at hise  
folye / [2899] and this same salamon seyth afterward /  
that by the sorweful visage of a man that is to seyne by  
the sorye & heuy cuntenaunce / of a man [2900] the fool /  
correctyth & amendyth hymself / [2901]

**T**hanne seyde Melibee / I schal nat cunne answeere to  
so manye & fayr resonys as 3e puttyn on to me / &  
schewyn / [2902] seyth schortely vn-to me 3oure wil  
& 3oure conseyll / & I am al redy to performe it & fulfille it /

**W**hanne Dame Prudence discouered al hire wif on to  
hym & seyde / [2904] I conseyle 3ow *quod* sche  
abouyn alle thynges / that 3e makyn pees by-twexe  
god and 3ow / [2905] & beth reconsyld vn-to hym / & to hise  
grace / [2906] ffor as I haue seyde 3ow heere by-for / God  
hath sufferid 3ow to haue this tribulacioun & dissesse for  
3oure synnys / [2907] and 3if 3e do as I seyde 3ow / god wele  
sende 3ore aduersarijs vn-to 3ow / [2908] & make hem  
to falle at 3oure feet / redy to doon 3oure wil & 3oure com-  
aundement / [2909] for Salomon seyth / whanne the con-  
dicioun of a man / is plesaunt & lykyng to god / [2910] he  
chaungith the hertis of the mannys aduersarijs & con-  
streynyth hem to beseke hym of pees & of grace  
[2911] & I preye 3ow lat me spekyn with 3oure aduersarijs  
pryuyly / [2912] for they schal nat knowe that it  
be of 3oure wil / or 3oure assent / [2913] and thanne whanne  
I knowe here wil & here entent I may conseyle 3ow  
the moore sewerly

[2914] **D**Ame *quod* Melibee doth 3oure wil &

3oure lykyng / [2915] for I putte me holly in 3oure  
disposicioun and ordynauce [2916]

**T**hanne dame Prudence whanne sche saw the greete  
wil of hire husbonde / delibered & took ays in  
hireself / [2917] thynkyng how sche myȝte bryng this  
neede into a good conclusioun / & to a good ende  
[2918] And whan sche saw hire tyme sche sente for hise  
aduersaryis / to come vn-to hire into a priue place /  
[2919] & schewede wisely vn-to hem / the greete goodis  
that comyn of pees [2920] & the greete harmys / &  
perilis that comyn in werre / [2921] & seyde to hem in  
a goodely manere / how that <sup>1</sup>hem oughte to han greet re-  
pentaunce / [2922] of the Iniurie & the wrong that they  
hadde doon to hire lord / and vn-to hire & to  
hyre douȝtyr [2923]

**A**nd whanne / they herdyn the goodelyche wordis off  
Dame Prudence / [2924] they weere so suppressyd / &  
rauschyte & haddyn so greet Ioye of hire that wondyr  
was to seen / or telle // [2925] A lady quod they ȝe han  
schewyd vnto vs / the blyssyng of swetnesse / aftyr the sawe  
of dauyth the prophete / [2926] ffor the reconsilyng whiche  
we ne been nat worthi for to haue / in no maneere / [2927] but  
we ouȝtyn to requiryn it with vericontrycioun / & humilitee  
that [2928] ȝe of 3oure greete goodnesse / haue presentid vn-  
to vs / [2929] Now se we weel / that the science & the cun-  
nyng / of Salomon is ful trewe / [2930] ffor he seyth that  
sweete wordys / multiplyen & encreasen frendis / &  
makyn schrewys to been debonayre & meeke /

[2931] Certis quod they / we putte oure deede &  
al oure matyere & cause al only in 3oure goode wil /  
[2932] and been redy to obeye to the comaunde-  
ment of myn lord / Melibee / [2933] And therefore deere  
& benygne lady / we preye ȝow & beseke ȝow as  
mekely as we cunne / And moun / [2934] that it like vnto  
3oure greete goodnesse / to fulfille in deede 3oure good-  
lyche wordis // [2935] ffor we consideryn & knowelechyn /



that we haue offendit & greuyd myn lord Melibee out of mesure [2936] so fer forth that we been nat of poweer / to makyn hise amendis / [2937] And therfore we obligyn & byndyn vs & oure frendis for to doon his wil / & al his comaundementz / [2938] but peraventure he hath swich heuynesse & swich wrathe to vsward / by cause of oure offence [2939] that he wele enioynyn vs swich a payne as we mowe nat bere ne sustene / [2940] And therfore noble lady we besekyn to thyn womanly pete / [2941] to takyn swich auysement / in this neede / that we ne oure frendis been nat diseritid ne distroyed / thorw oure folye [2942]

**C**ertis quod Prudence / it is an hard thyng [*et perilleuse*] [2943] that a man putte hym al vtreesly in arbitracioun / and Iugement & in the mygh & power of hyse enemyis / [2944] ffor Salomon seyth / Leeuyth me <sup>1</sup>& 3euyth credence to that that I schal seyn / I seye quod he the puple / folk / & governouris of holy cherche [2945] to thyn sone to thyn wif / to thyn frend ne to thyn brothyr [2946] ne 3eue thow neuere mygh ne maystrye / of thyn body whil thow leuyest [2947] ¶ Now sithyn that he defendyth that a man schulde nat 3euyne to hise brothir ne to his frend the my3t of hise body / [2948] by a strongere resoun / he defendith & forbedyth a man / to 3euyne hym self to his enemy / [2949] And natheles I conseyle 3ow that 3e mystruste nat myn lord / [2950] for I wot weel & knowe verrayly / that he is debonayre / and meeke large curteys / [2951] & nothyng desyrous / ne coueytous of good ne rychesse / [2952] for there ne is no thyng in this world / that he desiryth : saue only worschepe & honour / [2953] fferthere-moore I knowe & am ryzt sekyr that he schal nothyng doon in this neede with-outyn myn conseyll / [2954] And I schal so werkyn in this cause / that by the grace of oure lord god 3e schul been reconsyled vn-to vs

[2955] Thanne seydyn they with oon wois / worschepe-



ful lady we putte vs & alle oure goodis // all fully in 3oure  
wil & disposicioun [2956] and been redy to come / what  
day it lyke vnto 3oure noblesse / to lymite vs / or assigne  
vs / [2957] for to makyn oure obligacioun / & boond as strong  
as it likith vn-to 3oure goodnesse / [2958] that we mowe  
fulfyll the wil of 3ow // and of myn lord Melibee [2959]

**W**hanne Dame Prudence / hadde herd the answeys  
of these men / sche bad hem gon a-gayn priuily /  
[2960] and scheretornede to hire lord Melibee / and  
tolde hym how sche foond hise aduersarijs ful repentaunt /  
[2961] knowelechyng ful lowely here synnys & trespase and  
how they were redy / to suffere alle peyne / [2962] requiryng  
& preyinge hym / of merci & pete [2963]

**T**hanne seyde Melibee / he is weel worthi to haue  
pardoun & for3euenesse of hise synne / that excusith  
nat his synne / [2964] but <sup>1</sup>knowelecheth & repentith  
hym axinge indulgence [2965] ffor Senek saith there  
is the remissioun & for3euenesse of synne / where as the con-  
fescioun is / [2966] neighbore to innocence: is confessioun /  
[2967] [ . . . . . : . . .

. . . . . : . . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]

And therefore I assente / & conferme me to haue pees /  
[2968] but it is good that we doon not with-outyn the assent  
& wil of oure frendis [2969]

**T**hanne was prudence / ry3t glad & Ioyeful and  
seyde / [2970] Certis sere quod sche / 3e han weel &  
goodly answeyd / [2971] for rygh as by the conseyll /  
assent & helpe of 3oure frendis / 3e han been stirid  
to venge 3ow / & make werre / [2972] ry3t so with-  
outyn hire conseyll / schul 3e nat acordyn / 3ow / ne haue  
pees with 3oure aduersarijs / [2973] ffor the lawe seith  
There ne is no thyng so good be woye of kynde as a thyng  
to been onbounde / by hym that it was I-bou[n]de //

[2974] And thanne Dame Prudence / with-outyn delay  
or taryng / sente a-non hire messagis for hire kyn & for  
hire olde frendis / whiche that were trewe / & wyse [2975]

& tolde hem bi ordere in the presence of Melibee / al  
 this matieere as it is a-boue expressid / & declared / [2976]  
 And preyede hem that they wolde 3eue hire a-vis & con-  
 seyl / what best were to don in this neede // [2977] And  
 whanne Melibees frendis haddyn takyn hire ays / & deliber-  
 acioun of the forseide matieere [2978] & hadde examynede  
 it bi greet auysement & besynesse & greet diligence / [2979]  
 they 3eue ful conseyll / for to haue pees & reste / [2980] And  
 that melibee schulde resseyue with good herte hise aduer-  
 saryis / to for3euenesse & mercy

[2981] ¶ And whanne dame Prudence / hadde herd  
 thassent of hire lord / Melibee & the conseyll of hise frendis /  
 [2982] acord / with hire wil / & hyre entencioun [2983]  
 sche was wondirly glad / in hire herte / & seyde / [2984]  
 there is an old prouerbe / quod sche / that seyth That the  
 goodnesse that thow mayght don this day do it / [2985] &  
 abyde not ne delaye it not til tomorwe / [2986] &  
 therfore I conseyle that 3e sende 3oure massagis / sweche  
 as been discreete / & wyse . [2987] vn-to 3oure aduersaryis /  
 tellynge <sup>1</sup>hem on 3oure behalue / [2988] that 3if they wele  
 trete of pees / & of acord / [2989] that they schape hem  
 with-outyn delay or tarynge to comyn vn-to vs / [2990]  
 whiche thing perfornede was / in deede [2991] &  
 whanne these trespasouris & repentyng folk of here  
 folyis / that is to seyne the aduersaryis of Melibee / [2992]  
 haddyn herd what these messageris seydyn vn-to hem /  
 [2993] they weere right glad & ioeyful / & answeredyn  
 ful mekely & benygnyly [2994] 3eldynge gracy / &  
 thankynge to here lord Melibee & to alle his cumpaynye /  
 [2995] & schopyn hem with-outyn delay to gon with the  
 massangeris / & obeye to the comaundement of here lord  
 Melibee //

[2996] & ryȝt a-noon they toke here woye to the  
 court / of Melibee / [2997] & tokyn with hem summe  
 of here trewe frendis to make feith for hem / & for to  
 been here borwys / [2998] And whanne they were come to

the presence / of Melibee / he seyde hem these wordys /  
 [2999] It standith thus quod Melibee / & soth it is  
 that [3000] causeles & with-outyn skille / & resoun 3e  
 [3001] han doon greete Iniurijs & wrongis / to me &  
 to myn wif Prudence And to myn doughtyr also / [3002] for  
 3e han entred in-to myn hous by violence / [3003] & han  
 doon swich outrage that alle men knowyn wel / that 3e han  
 deseruyd the deth / [3004] And therefore wele I knowe  
 & wete of 3ow [3005] whethir 3e wele putte the  
 ponyschyng and the chastisyng in-to vengeance / of  
 this outrage in the wil of me / & of myn wyf:  
 or 3e wele nat [3006]

**T**Hanne the wyseste of hem thre / answerede for  
 hem alle & seyde / [3007] Sire we knowe  
 wel that we been onworthy to come to the court  
 of so gret a lord & so worthy as 3e been [3008] ffor  
 we han so greetly mystakyn vs / & han offendit & agilt  
 in swich a wise ageyn 3oure hye lordschepe / [3009] that  
 trewely we han deseruyd the deth / [3010] But 3it for  
 the greete goodnesse & debonaierete / that al the world  
 witnessith of 3oure persooone / [3011] we submyttyn vs to  
 the excellence & the benygnete of 3oure graciouse lordschepe  
 [3012] And been redy to obeye <sup>2</sup>to alle 3oure comandementis/  
 [3013] besekynge 3ow that of 3oure Merciable pete / 3e  
 wolde considere oure geeete repentaunce & lowe submissioun  
 [3014] & graunte vs for3euenesse of oure outrageous  
 trespacis and offence [3015] for weel we knowyn / that 3oure  
 liberal grace / & mercy / strechyn hem ferthere / in-to good-  
 nesse: than don oure outrageous giltis & trespacis in-to  
 wekedenesse [3016] Albe-it that cursedly & damp-  
 nably we han gilt agen 3oure highe lordschepe.<sup>1</sup> [3017]

**T**Hanne Melibee tok hem vp from the ground ful  
 benygnely / [3018] & resseyuede here oblygacyounys  
 & here bondis / by here othis vpon here plegges / &  
 borewis / [3019] and assignede hem a certeyn day to retoune  
 yn-to hise courtt [3020] forto resceyue & accepte the sentence /

[1—] All this  
 paragraph  
 is repeated  
 in the MS, begin-  
 ning Whanne  
 instead of  
 Thanne.]

& Iugement that Melibee wolde commaunde to been doon on hem / by the cause afforseid. [3021] whyche thyngis ordeynyd / euery man retourned to his hous //

[3022] And whanne that dame Prudence saw hire tyme sche feynede and axede hire lord Melibee [3023] <sup>1</sup>what vengeance he thouȝte to takyn of hise aduersaries [3024]

**T**O whiche Melibee answered & seyde certis *quod* he I thynke & purpose me fully [3025] to dyscrete hem of al that they han / & for to putte hem in exil for euere. [3026]

**C**Ertis *quod* dame prudence this were a crewel sentence / & mechil a-geyn resoun / [3027] for ȝe been riche I-now / & han non ned of othere menys / [3028] & ȝe myȝtyn lyȝtely in this wyse / getyn ȝow a coueytous name [3029] whiche is a vicious thyng & oughte to been eschewid of euery good man / [3030] ffor after the sawe of the word of thapostele / Coueytise is roote of alle harmys / [3031] & therefore it were betere / for ȝow to lese so meche good / of ȝoure owene : than for to takyn of hire good / in this manere [3032] ffor betere it is to lese good / with worchepe : thanne it is to wyne good with vilanye / & schame / [3033] And euery man oughte to doon his diligence / & his besynesse / to getyn hym a good name / [3034] & ȝit schal he nat only / besye hym in kepyng his good name : [3035] but he schal also enforsyn hym alwey to doon sumthing by whiche he may renouelle / hise goode name [3036] ffor it is wretyn / that the olde goode loos / or goode name / of a man is soone goon & passid / whanne it nys nat newid ne renouellyd / [3037] And as touchyng that ȝe seyn ȝe wele exile ȝoure aduersaryis / [3038] that thynkyth me mekyl a-geyn resoun And out of meseure / [3039] consyderede the power that they han ȝeun ȝow vp-on hem-self / [3040] And it is wretyn that he is worthy to leese hise priuylege that mysuseth & the poweer / that is ȝeun hym / [3041] & I sette caas / ȝe myȝte enioyne hem / that peyne by ryȝt / & by lawe / [3042] whiche I



trowe 3e ne may not do / [3043] I seye 3e myght nat  
 putte it to execucioun paraenture [3044] & thanne  
 weere it likly to returne to the werre as it was by-forn  
 [3045] & therfore 3if 3e wele that men doon 3ow obeys-  
 aunce / 3e muste deeme moore curteysly [3046] this is to  
 seye 3e muste 3eue moore esy sentence3 & Iugementis /  
 [3047] ffor it is wrete / that he that most curteysli  
 comaundyth / to hym: meen muste obeye / [3048] & there-  
 fore I preye 3ow / that in this necescite / & this neede  
 3e caste 3ow to ouercome 3oure herte // [3049] ffor senek <sup>[1 leaf 350 is  
cut out]</sup>  
 seyth that he that [ones] ouyrcomyth<sup>1 2</sup> [his/herte ouercomeþ <sup>[2 Harl. MS 1759,  
on leaf 181, back]</sup>  
 twies/ [3050] And Tullius/ seith. þer is/ no þing/ so  
 comendable in a gret<sup>t</sup> lorde. [3051] as/ when he is/ debon-  
 eire & meke. & appesþ hym mekeli. [3052] And I praie  
 you · þat ye wolþ/ forbere now to do vengeaunce [3053] in  
 suche a maner þat your good name maie be kept<sup>t</sup> &  
 conserued. [3054] & þat men maie haue cause &  
 mater/ to preise you in pite & mercy. [3055] &  
 þat ye haue no cause to repent<sup>t</sup> you of þing/ þat ye done.  
 [3056] ffor Senek<sup>t</sup> seith. he ouercomeþ in euyh/ ¶ Seneca.  
 maner þat repentþ hym of his/ victorie. [3057] Wher-  
 fore I praie you lat/ mercy ben in your  
 herte [3058] to þ<sup>e</sup> effecte & þ<sup>e</sup> entente þat god  
 almy3ti haue mercy vp-on you in his/ last iugement<sup>t</sup> [3059]  
<sup>2</sup> ¶ ffor seynt/ Iame seith in his/ episteþ/. Iugement<sup>3</sup> with ¶ Iacobus/.  
 out<sup>t</sup> mercy schalþ/ be do to. hym. þat haþ no mercy of  
 anoper wight<sup>t</sup>. <sup>[3 in margin]</sup>

[3060] When Me<sup>4</sup>libe had herd þ<sup>e</sup> grete skiles/ <sup>[4 leaf 182]</sup>  
 & resons/ of dame Prudence & of/ her/ wise informacions/  
 & techinges/. [3061] his herte gan enlyne to þ<sup>e</sup> wille of  
 his/ wif<sup>t</sup>. considering/ to her trewe entent/. [3062] con-  
 formed hym anon & assentid fulli to wirchen aftir/ hir/  
 counceile. [3063] & þankid god of/ whom procediþ aH/  
 goodnes/ þat hym sent<sup>t</sup> a wif/ of so gret<sup>t</sup>  
 discrecion. [3064] And when þ<sup>e</sup> daie come þat his/ aduer-  
 saries/ schulden appere in his presence. [3065] he spak/



to hem fuH/ goodli & seide to hem in þis/ wise. [3066] ¶ AH/  
 be it/ so þat of your pride & hie presumpcion & folie  
 & of your necligence & vnkonnyng'. [3067] Ye haue  
 mys/ born you & trespaced to me. [3068] Yet for as/  
 meche as/ I se & beholde your gret humylite  
 [3069] & þat ye ben sorie & repentaunt of/ your giltes/.  
 [3070] it/ constreyneth me to do yow grace & mercy ·  
 [3071] wherfore I receyue you to my grace. [3072] &  
 foryeuen/ you intierli alle þ<sup>e</sup> offences/ yniuries/ & wrongis/  
 þat ye han done ayenst/ me & myn. [3073] to þis/  
 effecte & to þis/ ende þat god of his/ endeles/ mercy ·  
 [3074] wiH/ at þe tyme of diyng/. foryeuen/ our/  
 giltes/ þat we haue trespaced vn-to hym in þis/ wrecchid  
 worlde. [3075] ffor doutles/ if/ we be sorie & repentaunt/  
 of þ<sup>e</sup> synnes/ & giltes/ in þ<sup>e</sup> whiche we han trespaced in þ<sup>e</sup>  
 sight/ of our/ lord god. [3076] he is/ so fre & so merci-  
 fuH/. [3077] þat he wiH/ foryeuen/ vs/ our/ giltes/. [3078]  
 & bryngen vs/ to þilke blis/ þat neuer hath ende.  
 To whiche blis/ he vs/ brynge · þat blood on crois/ for vs/  
 did sprynge. Qui cum deo patre. & cetera. //

**Here/ endith Chaucers/ tale/ of Melibe/ And Prudence/**<sup>1</sup>

[<sup>1</sup> Harl. MS 1758 *extract ends*]

[Here be-gynneth þe Prolooge of þe Monke. [Sloane MS 1685, on leaf 201, bk]

**W**han endid was þis tale of Melybe  
 And of / Prudence and of hir/ benygnyte 3080  
 Oure hoste sayd as I am a · feyth-fuht man  
 And by þe preciouſe corpus madryan  
 I hade leuere þan a Barelle of ale  
 þat godeleve my wyf hade hard þis tale 3084  
 ffor she nys no þenge of ſuche paciencie ·  
 As was þis Melibeus wyfes prudence  
 Be godes bones whan I bete my knaues .  
 Sche bryngeth me þe grete clubbed staves . 3088  
 And cryethe ſlee þe dogges euereycheon  
 And breke bothe backe and bone  
 And ȝif þat ony neghebour of myne  
 Wolle not in chirche to my wyf enclyne 3092  
 Or be ſo hardy to her/ to trespae  
 When ſhe cometh home ſhe renneth in my face  
 And cryeth false coward wreke þi wyfe  
 By corpus bonus I wylle haue þi knyfe 3096  
 And þou ſhalte haue my diſtafe and go ſpygne  
 firo day to nyȝt riȝt þus ſhe wolle begynne  
 Alas ſhe ſeithe þat euere I was ſhape  
 To wedde a melke ſoppe or ſo grete an ape 3100  
 þat wolle bene ouere lade with euery wyȝt  
 þou dorſte not ſtonde by þi wyf a ryȝt  
 Thys ys my lyfe but ȝif I wolde fyȝt  
 And oute at þe dore a-none I mote me dyȝt 3104  
 Or elles I am loſt but ȝif þat I  
 Be lyke a wylde lyonn foule hardy  
 I wote wele ſhe wylle do me ſlee ſom day [leaf 202] 3107  
 Some neyȝeboure and þan go my way] [Sloane extract ends]  
 For I am perlious with knyf in honde [Camb. Univ. Lib. MS Gg. 4. 27, leaf 351]  
 Al be it that I dar nat hire with-ſtonde

For sche is big in armys by myn feyth  
 That schal he fynde that hire mys doth or seyth 3112  
 But lat vs passe a-way from this matiere  
 Myn lord the Monk be merye of cheere  
 For 3e schul telle a tale trewely  
 Lo rouchestre stant heere faste by 3116  
 Ryde forth myn owene lord / brek nat oure game  
 But by myn trouthe I knowe nat 3oure name  
 Wher schal I calle 3ow myn lord daund Ioĥn  
 Or daun Thomas or ellis daun Alboñ 3120  
 Of what hous be 3e by 3oure fadyr kyn  
 I voue to god thow hast a ful fayr skyn  
 It is a gentyl pasture theere thow gost  
 Thow art nat lyk a penaunt or a gost 3124  
 Vp-on myn feyth thow art sum offyseer  
 Sum worthi Sexteyn or sum Celereer  
 ffor by myn fadyr soule as to myn doom  
 Thow art a maystyr whan thow art at hom 3128  
 No poore Cloysterer ne non nouys  
 But a gouernour worthy & wis  
 And therwithal of braun & of bonys  
 A weel farynge persone for the nonys 3132  
 I preye to god 3eue hem confusioun  
 That ferst the brouzte vn-to relygeoun  
 Thow woldyst a been a tredefowel aryȝt  
 Haddyst thow as greet a leue as thow hast myght 3136  
 To perforne al this lust in engendernge  
 Thow haddyst begetyn manye a creature  
 Allas why werys thow so syd a cope  
 God 3eue me sorwe but & I were a pope 3140  
 Nat only thow but euery myghty man  
 Thow he were schore hye vp on his pan  
 Schulde han a wif for al the world is lorn  
 Religeous hath takyn vp al the corñ 3144  
 Of tythyng / & we borel meen been schrympis [leaf 351, back]  
 Of feble treis theere comyn febele ympis

This makyth that oure eyris been so sklendere  
 And feble that they may not weel engendere 3148  
 This makyth that oure wiuys wele assaye  
 Relygeous folk for ȝe mowe the betere paye  
 Of Venus payementis than mowe we  
 God wot no lusschebruys paye ȝe 3152  
 But be nat wroth myn lord thow that I pleye  
 Ful ofte in game a sothe I haue herd seye  
**T**His worthy Monk tok al in pacience  
 And seyde I wele don al myn diligence 3156  
 As fer as sounyth in-to honeste  
 To telle ȝow a tale or two or three  
 And ȝif thow leste to herkyn hedyrward  
 I wele ȝow seyn the lyf of seynt Edeward 3160  
 Or ellis fyrst tragedeis wele I telle  
 Of whiche I haue an hundered in myn celle  
 Tragedie is to seyne a certeyn storye  
 As olde bokys makyn vs memorie 3164  
 Of hym that stod in greet prosperitee  
 & is I-fallyn out of hygh degre  
 In-to myserye & endyth wrechedely  
 And they been vercified comounly 3168  
 Of sexe feet whiche men callyn exametroun  
 In prose ek endytid been many on  
 And ek in metre in manye a sundery wyse  
 Lo this declarynge oughte I-nough suffyse 3172  
 Now herkyth ȝif ȝow lyke for to heere  
 But fyrst I ȝow be-seke in this matiere  
 Thow I be ordere telle nat these thyngis  
 Be it of popis emperourys or kyngis 3176  
 Aftyр here agis as men rede & fynde  
 But telle hem some by-fore & some be-hynde  
 As it comyth to myn remembraunce  
 Haue me excusede of myn ygnoraunce 3180

[Painting of the Monk on horseback.]

[leaf 352]

## Here begynnyth the Monk his tale

I<sup>1</sup> Wole be-wayle in manere of Tragedie  
 The harm of hem that stood in hey degre

[<sup>1</sup> This initial I is  
 carried down to  
 line 3198, in MS.]

And fellyn so that theere nas no remedie  
 To brynge hem out of here aduercitee 3184  
 For certeyn whan that fortune leste to fle  
 Theere may no man the cours of hire withholde  
 Lat not man truste on blynd prosperitee  
 By-war by these exsaumplys trewe & olde 3188

[Lucifer.]

At lucyfer thow he an aungel weere Lucifer  
 And not a man at hym I wele begynne  
 For thow fortune may noon aungel deere  
 From high degre 3it fel he for his synne 3192  
 Doun in-to helle where as he 3it is inne  
 O lucifer bry3teste / of aungellis alle  
 Now art thow satenas that mayst not twynne  
 Out of myserie / in which that thow art falle 3196

[Adam.]

Loo Adam in the feeld of damassene Adam  
 With goddys owene fyngyr mad was hee  
 And not begetyn of manys sperme onclene  
 And welte al paradys sauynge on tree 3200  
 Hadde neuere wordely man so heigh degree  
 As adam tyl he for mysgouernaunce  
 Was dreue out of his hye prosperitee  
 To labour & to helle & to myschaunce 3204



[*Sampson.*]

Loo Sampson that was annunciat [leaf 352, back] Samson  
 By aungel longe er his natyuite  
 And was to god almyghty consecrat  
 And stood in noblesse whil he myzte see 3208  
 Was neuere swich a-nothir as was hee  
 To speke of strenthe & therwyth hardynesse  
 But to hise wiuis tolde he his secree  
 Thorw whiche he slow hym self for wrechedenesse 3212

Sampson this noble almyghty champioun  
 With-outyn wepene saue hise handis tweye  
 He slow & al to-rente the lyoun  
 Toward his weddyng walkynge by the weye 3216  
 His false wif coude hym so pleese & preye  
 Til sche his conseyl knew & sche vntrewe  
 Vn-to hise fois his conseyl gan be-wreye  
 And hym forsok & tok a-nothir newe 3220

Thre hunderede foxis tok Sampson for yre  
 And alle here taylys he to-gedere bond  
 And sette the foxis taylys alle on feere  
 For he on euery tayl hadde knyht a brond 3224  
 And they brende alle the corn in that lond  
 On alle hire Oliueis<sup>1</sup> & vyny ek [1 is corrected]  
 A thousent men ek slow he with his hond  
 And hadde non wepene but an assis cheeke 3228

Whan they were slayn so trustede hym that he  
 Was wol nygh lorn for which he gan to preye  
 That god wolde on his payne han sum pete  
 And sende hym drynk / or ellis muste he deye 3232  
 And of this Assis cheke that was dreye  
 Owt of a wange tooth / sprong a-noon a welle  
 Of whiche he drank I-nough schortely to seye  
 Thus helpede hym god as Iudicum can telle 3236

By verray force at a Gazan on a nyght  
 Maugere philistienys of that Citee  
 The 3atis of the toun he hath vp ply3t [leaf 353]  
 And on his bak I-karyede hem hath hee 3240  
 Hye on an hil wheere as men my3te hym se  
 O noble almyghty Sampson leue & deere  
 Haddist thou nat told to women thyn secre  
 In al this world ne hadde be thyn peere 3244

This Sampson neythir Sythir drank ne wyn  
 Nor on his heed cam rasor non ne scheere  
 By precept of the massangeer deuyn /  
 For alle hise strenthis in hise heris weere 3248  
 And fully twenty wyntyr 3eer be 3eere  
 He hadde of Israel the gouernaunce  
 But soone schal he wepe ful manye a teere  
 For women schal hym brynge to myschaunce 3252

Vn-to his leman Dalida he tolde  
 That in hise heris al hise strenthe lay  
 And falsely to hise fomen sche hym solde  
 And slepynge vp in hire barm vp-on a day 3256  
 Sche maade to clippe or schere his heer a-way  
 And made his fomen his craft espyen  
 And whan that they hym fond in this aray  
 They boundyn hym faste & puttyn out hise eyen 3260

But er his heed / was clyppid or I-schaue  
 There was no bond<sup>1</sup> / with whiche men<sup>2</sup> mygh hym bynde  
 But now is he / in prisoun in a Caue <sup>[<sup>1</sup>nd, <sup>2</sup>en, corrected]</sup>  
 Wheere as they made / hym at the querne to grynde 3264  
 O noble Sampson / strongeste of man kynde  
 O whilom Iuge / in glorye & in rychesse  
 Now mayst thou wepyn / with thynne eyen blynde  
 Sythe thou from wele / art fallyn in wrechedenesse 3268

The ende of this caytyf was as I schal seye  
 Hise fomen made / a feste vp-on a day  
 And made hym as a fool / by-fore hem pleye  
 And this was in a temple / of greet aray 3272  
 But at the laste he maade a foul affray [leaf 353, back]  
 For he two pilleris schok / & made hem falle  
 And doun fil temple & al there it lay  
 And slow hym self & ek hise fo-men alle 3276

This is to seyne the pryncis euerychon  
 And ek thre hunderede bodyis weere there slayn  
 With fallynge of the greete temple of stoon  
 Of Sampson wele I no moore seyn 3280  
 Beth war bi this <sup>1</sup>exsaumple olde & pleyn<sup>1</sup> [→ later]  
 That no man telle here conseyl to here wyys  
 Of swich thyng as they wele haue secre fayn  
 If that it touche / hire / lymys or hire lyys 3284

[*Hercules.*]

Of Hercules the souereyn conquerour ¶ Hercules  
 Syngyn his laude his werkis & his renoun  
 For in his tyme of<sup>2</sup> strenthe he was the flour [2 of corrected]  
 He slow & rafte the skyn from the lyoun 3288  
 He of Centauros leyde the beste a-doun  
 He arpijs slow the crewel briddys felle  
 He goldene appillis / rafte of the dragoun  
 He drow out Cerberus out of helle 3292

He slow the crewel tyraunt Busirus  
 And made his hors to frete hym flesch & boon  
 He slow the fery serpent venymous  
 Of Achilois hornys <sup>3</sup>too / he brak on<sup>3</sup> [3-3 corrected] 3296  
 And he slow Cakus in a Caue of stoon.  
 He slow the geaunt Antheus the stronge  
 He slow the gresely boor & that a-noon  
 And bar the heed vp-on his spere longe 3300

Was neuere wight swich sithe that this world be-gan  
 That slow so manye monstres as dede he  
 Thourw out this wide world his name ran  
 What for his strenthe & for his hye bounte 3304  
 And euery reume wente he for to se  
 He was so strong that no man myghte hym lette  
 At boothe the wordys endis seyth trophee [leaf 354]  
 In-stede of boundis / he a piller sette 3308

A lemman hadde this noble Champioun  
 That highte dianira / frosch as may  
 And as these clerkis makyn mencyoun  
 Sche hath hym sent a scherte frosch & gay 3312  
 Allas this scherte allas & weyleaway  
 Enuenymyd was so subtyl with alle  
 That er that he hadde wered it half a day  
 It made his flesch al from hise bonys falle 3316

But natheles summe clerkis hire excusyn  
 By on that hyghte Nessius that it makid  
 Be as be may I wele hire not excusyn  
 But on his bak this scherte he werede al nakid 3320  
 Til that the scherte was for the venym blakid  
 And whan he saw noon othir remedye  
 In hote colys he hath hym self I-rakyd  
 For with no venym deynede hym to deye 3324

Thus starf this myghti Hercules  
 Lo ho may truste on fortune ony throwe  
 ffor hym that folwith al this world of prees  
 Er he be war is ofte I-leyd ful lowe 3328  
 fful wis Is he that can hym seluyn knowe  
 Beeth war for whanne that fortune leste to glose  
 Thanne waytith<sup>1</sup> sche hire man to ouerthrowe [<sup>1</sup> ith corrected]  
 By swich a weye as he wolde lest suppoose 3332

[*Nebuchadnezzar.*]

¶ The myȝty trone the precious tresor ¶ Nabegodonosor  
 The gloriouse Ceptre & royal mageste  
 That hadde the kyng Nabegodonosor  
 With tunge onethe may discryuede be 3336  
 He twijs wan Ierusalem Cete  
 The vessel of the temple he with hym ladde  
 At babiloine was his souereyn see  
 In whiche his glorie & his delyt he ladde 3340

The fayreste childeryn of the blod royal [leaf 354, back]  
 Of Israel he leet do gilde a-noon  
 And makede eche of hem to been his thral  
 A-mongis othere Danyel was oon 3344  
 That was the wiseste child of euerichon  
 For he the dremys of the child expouned  
 Where-as in chaldeye clerk was there noon  
 That wiste to what fyn hise dremys sounede 3348

The proude kyng leet make a statute of gold  
 Syxti Cubitis longe & seuene in breede  
 To whiche ymage he bothe ȝonge & olde  
 Comaunded to loute & haue in dreede 3352  
 Or in a furneys ful of flaumbis reede  
 He schal been brend that wolde not obeye  
 But neuere wolde assente to that deede  
 Danyel ne hise ȝonge felawys tweye 3356

This kyng of kyngis proud was & elayt  
 He wende that god that sit in Mageste  
 Ne myghte hym not byreue of his estat  
 And sodeynly he loste his dygnetee 3360  
 And lik a beste hym semede for to bee  
 And eet hey as an oxe & lay there oute  
 In reyn with wilde bestis walkede he  
 Tyl certeyn tyme was I-comyn a-boute 3364



And lyk an egellis federis wexsyn his erys  
 Hise naylis lyk a briddis clawis weere  
 Til god relesede hym a certeyn 3erys  
 And 3af hym wit & thanne with manye a teere 3368  
 He thankede god & euere his lyf in feere  
 Was he to doon a-mys or moore trespase  
 And tyl that tyme / he leyd was on his beere  
 He knew that god was ful of myzt & graace 3372

[*Belshazzar.*]

His sone which that hyzte Balthasar Baltasar  
 That held the regne aftyr hire fadyris day  
 He by his fader coude not be war [leaf 355]  
 ffor proud he was of herte & of aray 3376  
 And ek an ydolastre was he ay  
 Hise hye estat assurede hym in pryde  
 But fortune caste hym doun & there he lay  
 And sodeynly his regne he gan deuyde 3380

A feste he made vnto hise lordis alle  
 Vp-on a day & bad hem blythe bee  
 And thanne hise offiseris gan he calle  
 Goth bryngith forth the vessett quod he 3384  
 Which that myn fadyr in his prosperite  
 Out of the temple of <sup>1</sup>Ierusalem<sup>1</sup> berafte [1-1 corrected]  
 And to oure hye goddis thanke we  
 Of honour that oure olderis with vs lafte 3388

His wif hise lordis & hise concubynys  
 Ay dronkyn whil here apetitis laste  
 Out of these noble vessellis sundery wynys  
 And on a wal this kyng his eyen caste 3392  
 And saw an hand armles that wrot ful faste  
 ffor <sup>1</sup>feere<sup>1</sup> of whiche he quok & sykede soore  
 This hand that balthasar so soore a-gaste  
 Wroot Mane <sup>1</sup>techel<sup>1</sup> phares & na moore 3396

In al that land magicien was non  
 That coude expoungne what these letterys mente  
 But danyel expoungnede it a-noon  
 And seyde kyng god to thyn fadyr sente 3400  
 Glorie & honour / regne tresor rente  
 And he was proud / & no thyng god ne dradde  
 And therfore god greet<sup>1</sup> wreche<sup>1</sup> on hym sente [<sup>1</sup>—<sup>1</sup> corrected]  
 And hym berafte / the regne that he hadde 3404

He was out cast of manny cumpaynye  
 With assis was his habytacioun  
 And eet hay as a beste / in weet & drye  
 Tyl that he knew by grace & by resoun 3408  
 That god of heuene hath domynacioun [leaf 355, back]  
 Of euery regne / & euery creature  
 And thanne hadde god of hym compascioun  
 And hym restorede his regne & his figure 3412

Ek thow that art his sone art proud also  
 And knowist alle these sygnys verrayly  
 And art rebel to god & art his foo  
 Thow drank ek of hise wellys boldely 3416  
 Thyn wyf ek & thynne wenchis synfully  
 Dronke of the same vessel sundery wynys  
 And heryist false goddis cursedly  
 Therfore to the I-schapyn ful greet pyne is 3420

This hand was sent from god that on the wal  
 Wroot mane techel phares trust to me  
 Thyn regne is doon thow weyest noght at al  
 Deuidit is thyn regne / & it schal bee 3424  
 To Medes & to perses 3euyyn quod he  
 And tilke same nyȝt this kyng was slawe  
 And Daryus ocupied his degree  
 Thow he thereto hadde neythir ryȝt ne lawe 3428

Lordyngis ensaumple hereby may ȝe take .  
 How that in lordschepe is no sekyrnesse .  
 For whan fortune wele a man forsake .  
 Sche beryth a-wey his regne & hys rychesse . 3432  
 And ek hise frendis bothe moore & lasse .  
 For what that hath frendis thourr fortune .  
 Mishap wele make hem enemyis I gesse .  
 This prouerbe is ful soth & ful comune . 3436

[*Zenobia.*]

¶ Cenobia of palimerye queene	¶ Cenobia
As wrytyn Percyens of hire noblesse	
So worthi was in armys & so keene	
That no whit passede hire in hardynesse	3440
Ne in lynage nor othir gentillesse	
Of kyngis blod of perse is sche dessendid	
I seye that sche hadde not mooste fayrenesse	[leaf 356]
But of hire schap sche myȝte nat been a-mendid .	3444

From hire childhod / I fynde that sche fledde  
 Offise of wemen & to wode sche wente  
 And manye a wylde hertis blood sche schedde  
 With arwis broode that sche to hym sente 3448  
 Sche was so swift that sche anon hem hente  
 And whan that sche was eldere sche wolde kylle  
 Leonys lebardis & beris al to-rente  
 And in hire armys wilde hem at hire wille 3452

Sche durste wilde beestis denys seeke  
 And rennyn in the mountaigny[s] al be nyght  
 And slepyn vndyr the busch / & sche coude ek  
 Wrastellyn by verray forse & verray myght 3456  
 With any ȝong man were he neuere so wight  
 There myghte no thyng in hire armys stonde  
 Sche kepte hire maydynheed from euery wyght  
 To no man degnede hire for to been bonde 3460

But at the laste hire frendys haddyn hire maryed  
 To onedake a prynce of that cuntree  
 Al weere it so that sche hem longe taryed  
 And ȝe schal vndyrstonde how that he<sup>1</sup> [he corrected] 3464  
 Hadde swiche fantasyis as hadde sche  
 But nathelees whan they weere knyght in feere  
 They leuede in Ioye & in felycite  
 For eche of hem hadde othir leef & deere 3468

Saue on thyng that sche wolde neuere assente  
 By no wey . that he schulde by hire lye  
 But ones : for it was hire pleynt entente  
 To haue a child the world to multiplye 3472  
 And also sone as sche myghe espye  
 That sche was nat with childe with that deede  
 Thanne wolde sche suffere hym don his fantasye  
 Eft sonys & not but onys out of dreede 3476

And If sche were with childe<sup>2</sup> at tylke cast [leaf 356, back]  
 Namore<sup>2</sup> schulde he pleyen tylke game [2 childe, more,  
 corrected]  
 Tyl fynally fourty dayis weere past  
 Thanne wolde sche onys suffere hym the same 3480  
 Al weere this Onedake wilde or tame  
 He gat na moore of hire for thus sche sayde  
 It was to wyuys lecherye & schame  
 In othir cas ȝif men with hem playede 3484

Two sonys bi this Onedake hadde sche  
 The whiche sche kepte / in vertu & lettyrure  
 But now vn-to oure tale turne we  
 I seye so worschepeful a criature 3488  
 And wis therewith & large with mesure  
 So peynyble in the werre & curteys ek  
 Ne moore labour myghte in werre endure  
 Was noon thow al this world men schulde seeke 3492

Hyre ryche aray myghte not be told  
 As wel in vessel as in hyre clothynge  
 Sche was al clad in perre & in golde  
 And ek sche lafte not for noon huntynge 3496  
 To haue of sundery tungis ful knowynge  
 Whan that sche leyseer hadde / & for to entende  
 To lerne bokys was hire lykynge  
 How sche myghte in wertu hire lyf dyspende 3500

And schortely of this story for to trete  
 So doughty was hire husbonde & ek sche  
 That they conquerede manye regnys greeete  
 In the oryent with manye a fayr cete 3504  
 Apertenaunt vn-to the mageste  
 Of rome & with strong hand held hem faste  
 Ne neuere myghte hire fomen don hem fle  
 Ay whil <sup>1</sup>that Onadakys dayis laste<sup>1</sup> [<sup>1-1</sup> later correction] 3508

Hyre bataylis who so lyste hem for to reede  
 A-gayn soper the kyng & othere moo  
 And how that al this proces fyl in deede [leaf 357]  
 Why sche conquerede & what tytle therto 3512  
 And aftyr of hire myschif & hire wo  
 How<sup>2</sup> that sche was be-segit & I-take [<sup>2</sup> How corrected]  
 Let hym vn-to myn maystir Petraik go  
 That writ I-nough of this I vndyrtake 3516

Whan Onedake was deed sche myghtyly  
 The regnys held & with hire propre hond  
 A-gayns hire fois sche faught so crewelly  
 That theree nas kyng nor prynce in al that lond 3520  
 That he nas glad ȝif he that grace fond  
 That sche ne wolde vp-on his lond werreye  
 With hire they made allyaunce by bond  
 To been in pees & leete hire ryde & pleye 3524



The Emperour of rome Claudius  
 Ne hym be-forn the <sup>1</sup>Romen Galyeen [1 R corrected]  
 Ne durste neuere been so corageous  
 Ne noon Ermyn ne non Egipcien 3528  
 Ne Surreyn ne non Arabieen  
 With-inne the feeldys that durste with hire fyȝt  
 Lest that sche wolde hem wit hire handis sleen  
 Or with hire meyne puttyn hem to flyght 3532

In kyngis habite wente hire sonys two  
 As heyris of hire faderys regnes alle  
 And hermanno / & thimalao  
 Hire namys were as .persiens. hem calle<sup>1</sup> [1st calde] 3536  
 But ay fortune hath in hire hony galle  
 This myghty queen may no while endure  
 Fortune out of hire regne / made hire falle  
 To wrechedenesse & to mysaventure 3540

Aurelyan whan that the gouernaunce Aurelian  
 Of Rome cam In-to hire handis tweye  
 He schop vp-on his queen to doon vengeance  
 And with hise legiounys he tok his weye 3544  
 Toward Senobie & schortely for to seye [leaf 357, back]  
 He made hire fle / & at the laste hire hente  
 And feterede hire & ek hire chyldere tweye  
 And wan the lond & hom to rome he wente 3548

A-mongis othere thyngis that he wan  
 Hire chaar that was with gold wrought & perre  
 This greete roman this aurelian  
 Hath with hym lad for that men schulde it se 3552  
 By-forn his triumphe walkyth sche  
 With gilte cheynys <sup>1</sup>vp-on here nekke hangynge<sup>1</sup>  
 Corounede was sche as <sup>2</sup>aftr hyre degree [1-1, 2 later corrections]  
 And ful of perre chargit hire clothyng 3556

Allas fortune sche that whilom was  
 Dredeful to kyngis & to emperourys  
 Now gauryth al the peple on hire allas  
 And sche that helmede was in starke stourys 3560  
 And wan by force tounnys stronge & tourys  
 Schal on hire heed now were a vitremyte  
 And sche that bar the Ceptre ful of flour  
 Schal bere a distaf hire cost forto quyte 3564

[The modern instances which should come here, are at the end of the Tale in this MS.]

[Nero.]

Al-thow that Nero were vicious Nero  
 As ony feend that lyth ful lowe a-doun 3654  
 3it as tellyth vs Switonyus  
 This wide world hadde in subieccioun 3656  
 Bothe est & west / North & Septemptrioun  
 Of Rubees Safferys / & of perlys whyte  
 Weere alle hise clothis broudede vp & doun  
 For he in gemmys gretly gan delyte 3660

More delicat / more pompous of aray  
 Moore proud was neuere emperour than hee  
 That ilke cloth that he hadde wered a day  
 Aftyr that tyme he wolde it neuere se 3664  
 Nettis of gold thred hadde he greet plente  
 To fysche in tibre whan hym lyst to pleye  
 His lustis were alle lawe in his decree [leaf 358]  
 For fortune as his frend / hym wolde obeye 3668

He Rome brende for his delicacie  
 The Senatouris he slow vp-on a day  
 To heere how that men schulde weepe & crye  
 And slow his brothir & by his sistyr lay 3672  
 His modyr made he in pytous array  
 ffor he hyre wombe slytte to byholde  
 Where he conseyuede was so weyle-away  
 That he so lytyl of his modyr tolde 3676

No teer out of hise eyen for that syght  
 Ne cam but seyde a fayr woman was sche  
 Greet wondyr is how that he coude or myghte  
 Be domysman of hire deede beaute 3680  
 The wyn to bryngyn hym comaundede he  
 And drank a-noon / non othyr wo he made  
 Whan myght is Ioyned on to creweltee  
 Allas to deepe wil the venym wade 3684

In 3outhe a maystyr hadde this Emperour  
 To teche hym letterure & curteysye  
 For of moralite he was the floure  
 As in his tyme but 3if bokis lye 3688  
 And whil this Maystyr hadde of hym maystrye  
 He makede hym so cunning<sup>1</sup> & so souple [1 ing corrected]  
 That long tyme it was er tyranye  
 Or ony vice durste on hym oncuple 3692

This Seneca / of which that I deuyse  
 By cause that Nero hadde of hym swich dreede  
 For he from viciis wolde hym ay chastyse  
 Discretly by word & not by deede 3696  
 Syre wolde he seyn an emperour mot neede  
 Been vertyuous & hatyn tyrannye  
 For which he in a bath made hym to bleede  
 On bothe hise armys tyl he muste deye 3700

This Nero hadde ek of a custumance [leaf 358, back]  
 In 3outhe a-geyn his maystyr for to ryse  
 Which aftyrward hym thoughte a greet greuance  
 Therefore he made hym deye in this wyse 3704  
 But natheles this Seneca the wise  
 Ches in a bath to deye in this <sup>2</sup>manere<sup>2</sup> [2—3 corrected]  
 Rathere than han a-nothir <sup>3</sup>turmantrise<sup>3</sup> [2—3 tur, lise corrected]  
 And thus hath Nero slayn his maystir deere 3708

Now fil it so that fortune leste no lengere  
 The hyghe pryde of nero to cheryce  
 For thow that he were strong 3it was sche strengere  
 Sche thou3te thus bi god I am to nyce 3712  
 To sette a man that is fulfyld of vice  
 In high degre & emperour hym calle  
 By god out of his seete I wele hym tryce  
 Whan he lest wenyth / sonest schal he falle 3716

The peple ros vp on hym on a nygh[t]  
 For his defaute & whan he it espyed  
 Out of his doris he hath a-non hym dygh[t]  
 A-loone & there he wende a been alyed 3720  
 He knockede faste & ay the more he cryede  
 The fastere schettyn they the dorys alle  
 Tho wiste he weel he hadde hym self mys gyede  
 And wente his wey no lengere durste he calle 3724

The peple cryede / & rumblede vp & down  
 That with hise eris herde he how they seyde  
 Wheere is this false tyraunt this neroun  
 For fer almost out of his wit he broyde 3728  
 And to hise goddis pitously he preyede  
 For socour but it myghte not be-tyde  
 For dreed of this hym thoughte he deyede  
 And ran in-to a gardyn hym to hyde 3732

And in this gardyn fond he cherlys tweye  
 That seetyn by a fyr / greet & reed  
 And to these cherlys two he gan to preye [leaf 359]  
 To sleen hym & to gyrdyn of his heed 3736  
 That to his body whan that he was deed  
 Weere no dispyt doon / for his defame  
 Hym selue he slow be coude no betere red  
 Of whiche fortune lough & hadde game 3740

[*Holofernes.*]

¶ Was neuere a capitayn vndyr a kyng Olifern

That regnys mo pute in subieccioun

Ne strongere was in feeld<sup>1</sup> of alle thyng [<sup>1</sup> d later]

As in his tyme ne grettere of renoun 3744

Ne moore pompous in high presumpcioun

Than oloferne whiche fortune ay kyste

So licorously & ladde hym vp & doun

Til that his hed was of or that he wyste 3748

Nat only that this world hadde hym in awe

For lesynge of rychesse or liberte

But made euery man reneye his lawe

Nabugodonosor was god seyde hee 3752

Noon othir god schulde adowred bee

A-geyn this heste no whigh dar trespace

Saue in Bethulia a strong cete

Where Eliachym a prest was of that place 3756

But tak keep of the deth of Oloferne

A-mydde his ost / he dronke lay a nyght

With-inne his tente / as large as is a berne

And ȝit for al his pompe & al his myght 3760

Iudith a woman as he lay vp-right

Slepyng his heed of smot / & from his tente

Ful priuily sche stal from euery wight

And with his heed / vn-to hire towr sche wente 3764

[*Antiochus.*]

What nedyth it of kyng antiochus Antiochus

To telle his hyghe royal magestee

His hyghe pride hise werkys venymous

For swich a-nothyr was theere non as he 3768

Reede which that he was in machabee [leaf 359, back]

And reede the proude wordis that he seyde

And whi he fyl from high prosperite

And in an hil how wrechedely he deyede 3772



Fortune hadde hym<sup>1</sup> enchauntede so in pride [1? MS bym]  
 That verrayly he wende he myghte attayne

On-to the sterres vp-on euery syde

And in a balaunce weyn eche mountayne 3776

And alle the flodys of the see restrayne

And goddis peple hadde he most in hate

Hem wolde he slen in turnement & in peyne

Wenynge that god ne myghte his pride a-bate 3780

And for that nychanore & thymothee

With Iewis were venquischid myghtily

Vn-to the Iewis swich an hate hadde he

That he bad ordeyne his char ful hastily 3784

And swoor & seyde ful dispitously

Vn-to Ierusalem he wolde eft soone

To wreeke his yre on it ful crewelly

But of his purpos he was let ful soone 3788

God for his manace hym so soore smot

With inuisible wounde ay incurable

That in hise guttis carveit so & bot

That hise peynys were Importable 3792

And certeynly the wreche was resonable

For manye a manys guttis dede he peyne

But from his purpos cursede & dampnable

For al his smert he wolde hym nat restrayne 3796

But bad a-noon aparaylyn his host

And sodeynly er he was of it war

God dauntede al his pryde & al his bost

For he so sore fil out of his Chaar 3800

That <sup>2</sup>it hese<sup>2</sup> lymys & his skyn to-tar [2-2 corrected]

So that he neythir myghte go ne ryde

But in a chaar men a-boute hym bar [leaf 360]

Al forbrosed bothe bak & syde 3804

The wreche of god hym smoot so crewelly  
 That thurgh his body wikkede wermys crepte  
 And therwythal he stank so horybely  
 That noon of al his meyne that hym kepte 3808  
 Whethir so he a-wok or ellis sleepte  
 Ne myghte not the stynk of hym endure  
 In this myschef he waylede & ek wepte  
 And knew god lord of euery cryature 3812

To al his host & to hym self also  
 Ful wlatson was the stynk of his carayne  
 No man myghte hym beryn to ne fro  
 And in this stynk & in this horrible peyne 3816  
 He starf ful wrechedely in a mounteyne  
 Thus hath this robbour & this homycyde  
 That manye a man made to weepe & pleyne  
 Swich gwerdoun as bylongith on-to pryde 3820

[*Alexander the Great.*]

¶ The storye of alysaundir is so comune Alisaundyr  
 That euery wight that hath discrecioun  
 Hath herd al or sumwhat of his fortune  
 This wyde world as in conclusioun 3824  
 He wan by strenthe / & for his highe renoun  
 They weere glad for pees vn-to hym sende  
 The pride of man & beste he leyde a-doun  
 Where so he cam vn-to the worldis ende 3828

Comparisoun myghte neuere ȝit been makyd  
 By-twixen hym & a-nothir conquerour  
 For al this world for dreed of hym hath quakyd  
 He of knyghthod & of fredom flour 3832  
 Fortune hym made the heyre of hire honour  
 Save wyn & wemen no thyng myȝte aswage  
 His hye entente in armys & labour  
 So ful he was of lyonyn corage 3836

What preys weere it for hym thow that I tolde [leaf 360, back]  
 Of daryus & an hunderede thousent mo  
 Of Kyngis Dukis . Erlis . pryncis bolde  
 Whiche he conquerede & broughte in-to woo 3840  
 I seye as fer as men may ryde or go  
 The world was his what schulde I moore deuyse  
 For thow I wryte or tolde 3ow euere mo  
 Of his knyghthod it myghte not suffyse 3844

Twelue 3eer he regnede / as seyth Machabee  
 Philippis sone of Macidonye he was  
 That fyrst was kyng of grece the cuntre  
 O worthi gentile Alisaundere allas 3848  
 That euere schulde fallyn swich a cas  
 Enpoisounede of thynne owene folk thow weere  
 Thyn sys fortune hath turnede in-to aas  
 And for the ne wepe sche neuere a teere 3852

Who schal me 3eun teerys to compleyne  
 The deth of gentillesse & of fraunchise  
 That al this world weldede in his demeigne  
 And 3it hym thoughte it myghte nat suffyse 3856  
 So ful was his corage / of high empryse  
 Allas ho schal me helpe to endyte  
 ffals fortune & poysoun to dispise  
 The whiche two of al this wo I wyte 3860

[*Julius Cæsar.*]

¶ By wisdam manhod & by greet labour Iulius  
 From homble bed to royal mageste  
 Vp ros he Iulius the conquerour  
 That wan al th<sup>1</sup> occydent bothe lond & se [<sup>1</sup> o corrected] 3864  
 By strenthe of hand or ellys by trettee  
 And vn-to Roome made hem trybutarye  
 And sithe the Emperour of rome was he  
 Tyl that fortune wex his Aduersarye 3868

¶ O myghty Cesar that in Thessalye Cesar  
 A-geyns Pompeynys fadyr thyn in lawe  
 That of thorient hadde al the Chiualrye [leaf 361]  
 As fer as that the day be-gynnyth dawe 3872  
 Thow thour thyn kynghod hast hem take & slawe  
 Saue fewe folk that with Pompeious fledde  
 Thorw which thow puttist al the oryent in awe  
 Thanke fortune that so weel the spedde 3876

But now a lytyl while I wele bewayle /  
 This Pompeyous this nobele gouvernour  
 Of Rome whiche that fleigh at this batayle  
 I seye on of his men a fals traytour 3880  
 His hed of smot to wynnyn hym fauour  
 Of Iulius & hym the hed he broughte  
 Allas Pompeye of thorient Conquerour  
 That ffortune vn-to swich a fyn the broughte 3884

To Rome a-gayn repayrith Iulius  
 With his tryumphe lauryat ful hye  
 But on a tyme Brutus Cassius  
 That euere hadde of his estaat enuye 3888  
 Ful pryuyly hath mad conspiracye  
 A-geyns this Iulius in subtyl wise  
 And caste the place in whiche he schulde deye  
 With boydekynys / as I schal 3ow deuyse 3892

This Iulius to the capitolye wente  
 Vp-on a day as he was wone to goon  
 And in the Capitolye a-non hym hente  
 This false Brutus & <sup>1</sup>hese othere ffoon<sup>1</sup> [1—<sup>1</sup> corrected] 3896  
 And stikede hym with Boydekynys a-noon  
 With manye a wounde & thus they leete hym lye  
 But neuere gront he at no strok but oon  
 Or ellis at two / but if his storrye lye 3900

So manly was this Iulyus at herte  
 And so weel louyd estatly honeste  
 That thow hise dedly woundis soore smerte  
 His mental ouer his hepis castyth he 3904  
 For non man schulde seen his priuyte [leaf 301, back]  
 And as he lay on deyinge in a traunce  
 And wiste verrayly that deed he muste bee  
 Of honeste ȝit hadde he remembraunce 3908

Lucan to this storye I recomende  
 And to Swetoun & to valerius also  
 That of the storye wrytyn word & ende  
 How that these greete Conquerourys two 3912  
 Fortune was fyrst freend & sithe a foo  
 No man ne truste vp-on hire fauour longe  
 But haue hire in a-wayte for euere mo  
 Witnesse on alle these conquerourys stronge 3916

[*Cresus.*]

¶ This ryche crysus whilom kyng of lyde Crisus  
 Of whiche Cresus / Cirus soore hym dradde  
 ȝit was he caught a-mydd e al his pryde  
 And to be brent men to the fuyr hym ladde 3920  
 But swich a reyn down from the walkyn shadde  
 That slow the fuyr & made hym to escape  
 But to be war no grace ȝit he hadde  
 Til fortune on the galwis made hym gape 3924

Whan he escapid was <sup>1</sup>he can nat stente<sup>1</sup> [1—1 corrected]  
 For to begynne a newe werre a-gayn  
 He wende weel for that fortune hym sente  
 Swich hap that he escapid thour the rayn 3928  
 That of hise fois he myghte nat been slayn  
 And ek a sweuene vp-on a nyght he mette  
 Of which he was so proud & ek so fayn  
 That in vengeance he al his herte sette 3932



Vp-on a tre he was as that hym thou3te  
 Where Iubiter hym wesch bothe bak & syde  
 And phebus ek a fayr towayle hym broughte  
 To dreye hym with & therfore wex his pryde 3936  
 And to his doughtyr which that stod hym besyde  
 Which that he knew in high science habounde  
 He bad hire telle hym<sup>1</sup> what it signefye [<sup>1</sup> in corrected] [leaf 362]  
 And sche his dreem bygan ryght thus expoungne 3940

The tre quod sche the galwis is to meene.  
 And Iubiter bitokenyth snow & reyn.  
 And Phebus with his towayle so cleene.  
 Tho been the sunnys stremys for to seyn. 3944  
 Thow schat an hangede been fadyr certayn.  
 Reyn schal the wasche & sounne schal the dreye.  
 Thus warnede hym ful plat & ful pleyn.  
 His doughtyr which that callede was Phanye. 3948

An hangede was Cresus the proude kyng  
 His royal trone myghte hym not a-vayle  
 Tragedy is noon othir manere thyng  
 Ne can in syngynge crye ne bewayle 3952  
 But for that fortune al day wele assayle  
 With vn-war strok the regnys that been proude  
 For whan men trustyth hire thanne wele sche fayle  
 And couere hire brighte face with a cloude 3956

[These 4 modern instances should follow 'Zenobia,' p. 486 (G-T. 268).]

[*Peter the Cruel, of Spain.*]

.O. noble .O. worthy Petro glorie of Spayne Petro  
 Whom fortune heeld<sup>2</sup> so highe in mageste [<sup>2</sup> a late]  
 Weel oughtyn men thyn petous deth to compleyne  
 Out of thyn land thyn brothir made the fle 3568  
 And aftyr at a sege by subtyletee  
 Thow were betraysed & lad vn-to his tente  
 Where as he with his owene hand slow the  
 Succedyng in thy regne & in thyn rente 3572

The feld<sup>1</sup> of snow / with the egel<sup>1</sup> of blak<sup>1</sup> therin [<sup>1</sup> d, g, ak,  
corrected]  
 Caught with the lymerod colorede al with glede. [Bertrand du  
Guesclin.]

He brew this cursedenesse & al this synne

The wekede nest was werkere of this neede 3576

Nought Charles / Olyuer that tok ay hede

Of trouthe & honour but of armoryke [Oliver de Mauny  
of Britanny.]

Genyloun Olyuer corrupt for meede

Broughte this worthi kyng to swich a bryke 3580

[*Peter of Cyprus.*]

O worthy Petro Kyng of Cipre also [leaf 362, back] Petro

That Alisaundere wan by high maystrye

fful manye an hethene wroughtist thow ful wo

Of whiche tweyne ounne lyges hadde envie 3584

And for no thyng but for thy chialrye

They in thyn bed han slayn the by the morwe

Thus can fortune / hire wheel gouerne & gye

And out of Ioye brynge men to sorwe 3588

[*Bernabo Visconti, of Milan.*]

¶ Of Melan grete <sup>2</sup>Bernabo Viscounte [? ? MS. ? G]

God of delyt & schorge of lumbardye

Whi schulde I nough thyn Infortune acounte

Syn in estat thow clombyn weere so hye 3592

Thyn brotherys sone that was thyn double allye

ffor he thyn newew was & sone in lawe

With-inne his prysoun made the to deye

But why he how not I that thow weere slawe 3596

[*Ugolino, Count of Pisa.*]

¶ Of the Erl hugelyn of Pyre the langour

Theere may no tunge telle for pite

But lytyl out of Pize stant a tour

In which tour in prysoun put was he 3600

And with hym been hise lyte childere thre

The oldeste skarsely fyue 3eer was of age

Allas fortune it was greet crewelte

Swiche bryddis to putte in swich a cage 3604

Dampnede was he to deye in that prysoun  
 For Roger which that bischop was of Pyze  
 Hadde on hym mad a fals suggestioun  
 Thour the peple gan vp-on hym ryse 3608  
 And puttyn hym in prysoun in swich wyse  
 As 3e han herd & mete & drynk he hadde  
 So smal that wel anethe it may suffyse  
 And there withal it was fful poore & badde 3612

And on a day by-fel that in that hour  
 Whan that his meete / wont was to been brought [Leaves 363-4, Camb. MS,  
are cut out;  
till l. 3653.]  
 [The Ieylour shet þe dores of þe toure [Sloane MS 1685, on leaf 209]  
 he herd it wele but he sawe it nouȝt 3616  
 As in hys herte a-none þere felle a þouȝt  
 þat þei for hungre wolde done hem dye  
 Alas. quod he Alas þat I was wrouȝt  
 þere-with þe teeres felle fro þe eye 3620

**H**is ȝonge sonne þre ȝeere was of age  
 Vnto hym said fader' why do ȝe wepe  
 Whan wille þe Gaylour brynge our' potage  
 Is þere no morselle brede þat ȝe do kepe 3624  
 I am so hongerye þat I may not slepe  
 Nowe wolde god þat I myȝte slepen euere  
 [Than schulde non hungre in my wombe crepe. [Harl. 1759,  
leaf 188, bk]  
 Ther/ is/ nothyng' saue breed that me were leuyr/.] 3628

**T**hys day by day þe childe gan to crye [Sloane MS 1685, on l/209]  
 Tyll in hys ffadere barme a doune hit lay  
 And said fadir/ fare wele I mot deye  
 And kyste hys fader' and deyde þe same daye 3632  
 And whan hys woofulle fadere did hym saye  
 ffor. woo hys arnes too he gan to byte  
 And sayde fortune Alas and weylaway  
 þi. false wyles my woo I may wyte 3636

**H**is children þat fortune hungry was [Sloane MS 1685]

þat he hys armes gnawe and not for woo

And said fader' do not so Alas.

But rathere ete þe flesshe vpon vs twoo 3640

Oure. flessch þou yaveste vs take oure flesshe vs fro.

And ete y-nouȝe riȝt þus to hym þei saide [leaf 219, back]

And after þat with-In a day or two

þei leyde hem doune in his lappe & dyed 3644

**H**ym selfe dispeyred eke for longer starfe

Thus endid ys þe myȝti Erle of pyse

fro hyȝe estate fortune fro hym carf

Of þis Tregedye hit ouȝt ynouȝe suffice 3648

ho · so wylle here hit/ in a lenger' wyse

Redeth þe grete poete of Itayle

þat/ hyȝt/ Daunte for he can hit deuȝse 3651

fro poynte to poynte not oo worde wille he fayle] [Sloane extract ends.]

[*Sloane MS 1685, on leaf 213, back.*]

[**Here begynneth þe Prolooge of þe Nunne Preoste**

**H**oo *quod* / þe knyzt gode sir / no more of thys  
 þat 3e han sayde ys riȝt ynoweȝ y-wys.  
 And mochel more for litel hevynesse  
 ys ryȝt ynouȝe to mechel folk' as I gesse 3960  
 I sey for me hit ys a grete disece  
 Where as men hañ beñ in grete helth̄ & eese [leaf 214]  
 To herene of her/ sodeyn̄ fañ Alas  
 And þe Contrarye is . grete Ioy & solace 3964  
 And whan a man hath̄ beñ in pore estate  
 And clymbith v̄p̄ and wexeth̄ fortunate  
 And þere abydeth̄ in prosperite  
 Suche thynḡe ys gladsom as hit thynketh̄ me 3968  
 And þouȝe suche thynḡe were goodely forto telle  
 // Ye. *quod*/ oure hoost by Seynt Poules belle  
 Ye say riȝt sothe þis Monke clappeth̄ loude  
 he . spake howe fortune couered with a cloude 3972  
 I note neuere what & also of a treaide  
 Ryȝt/ now̄e ye herð̄ & parde no remedie  
 hit ys forto be-wayle & complayne .  
 þat þat ys done and als hit ys a payne 3976  
 As ye haue sayd/ to here of/ hevynesse  
 Sir/ Monke no more of þis so god you blesse  
 Your/ tale annoyeth̄ al þis companye  
 Suche talkynge ys not worth̄ a butter<sup>2</sup>-flyeȝ 3980  
 And þere-in ys . no sporte nor/ no game  
 Where-fore Sir/ Monke doun Piers by your' name  
 I pray you hertely telle vs som what elles  
 ffor siker' nere clynkynḡe of/ your' belles 3984



þat in your' brideþ hongeth on euery syde [Sloane MS 1685]  
 By heuen kyng þat for vs alle dyede  
 I shalle for þis falle down for slepe  
 Al-þouze þe sloweþ hade neuere be so depe 3988  
 þan hathi youre tale ben tolde in vayne  
 ffor certeynly as þese clerkes sayne  
 Where as a man may han none audience  
 Nouzt<sup>t</sup> helpeth to tellen hys sentence 3992  
 And wele I woote þe substaunce ys in me  
 yf ony thyng shal wele reportid be  
 Sir/ saye some what of huntyng I you praye  
 Nay quod / þe Monke I· haue no luste to playe 3996  
 Nowe let a noþer' telle as I haue tolde  
 þan spake our Oste with rude speche and bolde [leaf 214, back]  
 And sayd vnto þe Nonnes Preost a-none  
 Come nere Sir Preost comme nere sir Iohn 4000  
 Telle vs suche thenges as may our' hertes glade  
 Be mery þouze þou ryde vpon A Iade.  
 þat/ þei þine hors. be foul or lene  
 Yf/ he wille serve þe recke þe nouzt/ a bene 4004  
 looke þat þine hert/ be mery euere mo ·  
 3is. hoste [q]uod he so mote I ryde or go ·  
 But/ I be mery y-wys I wille be blamed  
 And rȳt/ a-none he hathe hys tale y-tamed · 4008  
 And þus he sayde to vs euereichon  
 Thys swete preost/ þis gode man Sir/ Iohn

Here endeth þe Prologge

[*Sloane MS 1685, on leaf 214, back.*]

## &amp; begynneth þe tale

**A**pore wydowe some dele stope in age  
 Was whilom dwellynge in a narow cotage 4012  
 Be-sydes a grove stondynge in a dale  
 Thys wydow of whiche I telle you my tale  
 Syþens þilke day þat she was laste a wyfe  
 In pacience ladde a fulle symple lyf 4016  
 ffor lytelle was hir/ catelle & hir rent  
 By husbondry of suche þat god hir/ sent  
 Sche fonde hir/ self / & eke hir douztren two ·  
 Thre large sowes hade she & no moo 4020  
 Thre kyne & eke a shepe þat hiȝt/ mal  
 ful soty was hir/ boure and eke hir / haȝ  
 In whiche she ete many a sclender' mele  
 Of/ poynaunte sawce hir nedeth nevere a dele 4024  
 No deynte Morseȝ passed hir/ throote  
 hir diete was accordaunt to hir coote  
 Replecion ne made her neuere seke  
 A-tempre dyete was alle hir/ physike 4028  
 And excercise & hert sufficiounce .  
 þe gowte let hir/ no thyng to daunce  
 Ne poplexie ne shente nouȝt hir/ heede  
 Ne wyne dronke she neiper' whyte nor reede 4032  
 Her bord was served moste with white & blake [*leaf 215*]  
 Mylke and browne brede in whiche she fonde no lake  
 Seynde bakoȝ and some tyme an eye or twei  
 ffor she was as hit were a manere of a deie 4036  
 A gardeyne she hade enclosed alle aboute  
 With stykes and a drye dyche with-oute  
 In whiche she hade a Cok/ þat hyȝt Chauntelere  
 In alle þe londe of Crawynge was hys peere 4040

hys voice was muryer þan þe murye orgōn [Sloane MS 1685]  
 On masse dayes þat in þe Chirche goōn  
 Wele sykerere was þe crowynge in hys loggo  
 Then ys a Clok /. or an Abbey orlogge 4044  
 Be nature he knewe eche ascencioun  
 Of equynoxiol of þilke toun  
 ffor when degrees xv were discended  
 þan knewe he þat it myȝt not be amendid] [Sloane extract ends]  
 His colour was reddere than the fyne coral [Camb. Univ. MS  
 Gg. 4. 27, leaf 365]  
 And batayled as it were a castel wal  
 His byl was blak / and as the leet it schoon  
 Like asure weere hise leggis & hise toon 4052  
 Hise naylis whittere / than the lylle flour  
 And lik the burnede gold was his colour  
 This gentil kok hadde in his gouernaunce  
 Seuene hennys for to doon al his plesaunce 4056  
 Whiche weere hise susterys & hise paramouris  
 And wondyr lyk to hym of colourys  
 Of whiche the fayreste hewyd on hire throte  
 Was clepid fayre dameselle Pertelote 4060  
 Curteys sche was / discreet & debonayre  
 And compaynable & bar hire self so fayre  
 Syn thilke day that sche was seue ȝeer old  
 That trewely sche hath the herte in hold 4064  
 Of Chauntecleer lokyn in euery lith  
 He louede hym so that weel was hym therwith  
 But swich a Ioye it was to heere hem synge  
 Whan that the bryghte sune be-gan to sprynge 4068  
 With sweete a-cord myn lef is faryn on londe  
 ffor thilke tyme as I haue vndyrstonde  
 Bestis & bryddis coude speke & synge  
 And so be-fel that in a dawenyng 4072  
 As Chauntecleer a-mong hise wyuys alle  
 Sat on his perche that was in an halle  
 And next hym sat Dame Pertelote  
 This Chauntecleer gan gronyn in his throte 4076

As man that in his dreem is drechid sore  
 And whan that pertelote thus herde hym roore  
 Sche was a-gast & seyde herte deere  
 What eylyth 3ow to groone in this maneere 4080  
 3e been a verray slepere fy for schame  
 And he answerde thus / & seide Madame  
 I preye 3ow that 3e take it nat at gref  
 By god me mette I was in swich myschef 4084  
 Rygh now that 3it myn herte is score afrit  
 Now god quod he myn sweuene reche a-rygh[t]  
 And kepe myn body out of foul prysoun [leaf 365, back]  
 Me mette how that I romede vp & doun 4088  
 With-inne oure 3erd where that I saw a beste  
 Was lik an hound & wolde han mad a-reste  
 Vp-on myn body & anhad me deed  
 His colour was be-twixe 3elw & reed 4092  
 And typpid was his tayl & bothe hise eris  
 With blak onlyk the remenaunt of hise heris  
 His snoute smal with glowynge eyen tweye  
 3it for his lok for fer almost I deye 4096  
 This causede me myn gronyng douteles  
 Avoy quod sche fy on 3ow herteles  
 Allas quod sche for by that god a-boue  
 Now han 3e lost myn herte & al myn loue 4100  
 I can nat loue a coward by myn feyth  
 ffor certys what so any woman seyth  
 We alle desyryn 3if it myghte be  
 To han husbondis hardy wyse & fre 4104  
 And secre / & no nygard ne no fool  
 Ne hym that is agast of euery tool  
 Ne noon auauntour by that god a-boue  
 How durste 3e seyn for schame on to 3oure loue 4108  
 That any thyng myghte make 3ow a-feryd  
 Han 3e no manys herte & han a berd  
 Allas & cunne 3e been agast of sweuenys  
 No thyng god wot but vanite in sweuen is 4112

Sweuenys engenderyn / of repleciounys  
 And ofte of fume & of complexiounys  
 Whanne humouris been to haboundaunt in a wight  
 Sertis this drem whiche 3e han met to nyght 4116  
 Comyth of the greete superfluite  
 Of 3oure reede colera parde  
 Whiche causyn folk to dredyn in here dremys  
 Of arwis & of fyr with rede lemys 4120  
 Of rede bestis that they wele hym byte  
 Of contek & of whelpis greete & lite  
 Righ as the humour of malencolye  
 Causith ful manye a man in slep to crye 4124  
 ffor feer of blake beris / or of bolys blake [leaf 366]  
 Or ellis blake deuyllis wole hem take  
 Of othere humouris coude I telle also  
 That werkyn manye a man in sleep ful wo 4128  
 But I wele passe as lyghtely as I can  
 To Catoun which that was so wis a man  
 Seyde he nat thus ne do no fors of dremys Sompnia ne cures  
 Now sire quod sche whan we flye from the bemys 4132  
 ffor godis loue tak sum laxatyf  
 Vp peril of myn soule & of myn lyf  
 I conseyle 3ow the beste I wele nat lye  
 That bothe of colere & of malencolye 4136  
 3e porge 3ow & for 3e schal nat tarye  
 Thow in this toun is non apotecarye  
 I schal myn self to erbis techyn 3ow  
 That schul been for 3oure hele & for 3oure prow 4140  
 And in oure 3erd two erbis schal I fynde  
 The whiche han of here propirte by kynde  
 To porge 3ow be-nethe & ek a-bove  
 ffor-3et nat this for godis owene lowe 4144  
 3e been ful colerik of complexioun  
 Ware the sunne in his ascencioun  
 Ne fynde 3ow nat replet / of humouris hoote  
 ffor yef he do / I dar leye a grote 4148



That 3e schul han a feuere terciane  
 Or an agu that may been 3oure bane  
 A day or two 3e schul haue digestivis  
 Of wermys er 3e take 3oure laxatyues 4152  
 Of lauriol sentaurye / & fumeteere  
 Or ellis of Elebre that growith theere  
 Of Catapuce / or of Gattris beryis  
 Or Erbe Iue that growith in oure 3erd theere merye is  
 Pikke hem vp righ as they growe & ete hem in 4157  
 Be merye husbonde for 3oure fadyr kyn  
 Dredyth no dreem I can seye 3ow no moore  
 Madame quod he graunnt mercy of 3oure lore 4160  
 But natheles as touchith Daun Catoun  
 That hath of wisdam swich a greet renoun  
 Thow that he bad no dremys for to dreede [leaf 306, back]  
 By god men may in olde bokis rede 4164  
 Of manye a man moore of autorite  
 Than euere catoun was so mote I the  
 That al the reuers seyn of his sentence  
 And han weel foundyn by experience 4168  
 That dremys been signyficiounnys  
 As wel of ioye as of tribulaciounnys  
 That folk enduryn in this lyf present  
 Theree nedyth of this makyn non argument 4172  
 The verray preue schewith it in dede  
 ¶ Some of the gretteste autourys as men reede Naracio  
 Seyth thus that to felawys wente  
 On pilgrymage with a ful good ente[n]te 4176  
 And happede so they comyn in a toun  
 Where as there was swich a congregacioun  
 Of peple & ek so streyt of herbigage  
 That they ne founde as meche as a cotage 4180  
 In whiche they myghe bothe I-loggede be  
 Wherefore they musten of necescite  
 As for that nyght departyn cumpaynye  
 And eche of hem goth to his ostellerye 4184

And tok his logyng as it wolde falle  
 That on of hem was logit in a stalle  
 ffer in a ȝerd with oxin of the plough  
 That othir man was logid weel I-nough 4188  
 As was his auenture / or his fortune  
 That vs gouernyth alle as in comune  
 And so be-fel that longe er it was day  
 This man mette in his bed there as he lay 4192  
 How that his felawe gan vp-on hym calle  
 And seyde allas for in an oxis stalle  
 This nyght I schal been morderid there I lye  
 Now help me deere brotyr er I deye 4196  
 In alle haste come to me he seyde  
 This man out of his slep for fer abreyde  
 And whan that he was wakenede of his slep  
 He turnede hym & tok of this no keep 4200  
 Hym thoughte his dreem nas but a vanyte [leaf 367]  
 Thus twyis in his slepyng dremede he  
 And at the thredde tyme / ȝit his felawe  
 Cam as hym thoughte / & seyde I am now slawe 4204  
 Byhold mynne bloody woundis deepe & wyde  
 A-ris vp erly in the morwe tyde  
 And at the west gate / of the toun quod he  
 A carteful of donge / there thu schat se 4208  
 In wich myn body is hid ful pryuyly  
 Do thilke carte a-reste boldely  
 Myn gold causede myn mordre certeyn  
 And tolde hym euery poynt how he was slayn 4212  
 With a wol pitous face pale of hewe  
 And truste weel this drem he fond ful trewe  
 ffor on the morwe as sone as it was day  
 To his felawe he tok te nexte way 4216  
 And whan that he cam to his oxis stalle  
 Aftyr his felawe he be-gan to calle  
 ¶ The hosteleer answerede hym a-non  
 And seyde sere ȝoure felawe is a-goon 4220

As sone as day he wente out of the toun  
 This man gan fallyn in suspecious  
 Remembrynge hym on the dremys that he mette  
 And forth he goth no lengere wolde he lette 4224  
 Vn-to the Westgate of the toun & fond  
 A donge carte wente as it weere to dunge lond  
 That was a-rayed in that same wyse  
 As 3e han herd the dede man deuyse 4228  
 And with an hardy herte he gan to crye  
 Vengeaunce & Iustise of this felonye  
 Myn felawe morderede is this same nyght  
 And in this carte heere he lyth gapynge vp-ryght 4232  
 I crye out on the mynystis quod he  
 That schulde kepe & rewele this cete  
 Harrowe allas here lyth myn felawe slayn  
 What schulde I moore vnto this tale sayn 4236  
 The peple out sterte & caste the carte to grounde  
 And in the myddyl of the donge they founde  
 The dede man that morderede was al newe [leaf 367, back]  
 O blysfyl god that art so Iuste & trewe 4240  
 Lo how that thow bewreyis mordre alway  
 Mordre wele out that se we day be day  
 Mordre is so wlatsume & abhomynable  
 To god that is so Iust & resonable 4244  
 That he ne wele not suffere that it helid be  
 Thow it abyde a 3eer or two or thre  
 Mordre wele out this myn conclusioun  
 And ryght a-noon mynyste of that toun 4248  
 Han hent the cartere & so sore hym pynynd  
 And ek the hosteller so soore engyned  
 That they be-knewe here wikkedenesse a-non  
 And weere an hangede by the nekke boon 4252  
 Here may men seen that dremys been to drede  
 ¶ And certis in the same bok I reede  
 Rygh in the nexte chapitere aftyr this  
 I gabbe not so haue I ioie or blys 4256

Two men that wolde a passed ouyr the see  
 ffor certeyn cause in-to a fer cuntre  
 If that the wynd ne hadde been contrarye  
 That made hem in a cete for to tarye 4260  
 That stod ful merye vp-on an hauene syde  
 But on a day a-geyn the euetyde  
 The wynd gan schaunge & blew rygh as hem leste  
 Iolyf & glad they wente to here reste 4264  
 And castyn hem ful erly for to sayle  
 But herkenyth to that on man fyl a gret meruayle  
 That on of hem in slepyng as he lay  
 Hym mette a wondyr drem a-geyn the day 4268  
 Hym though[t]e a man stod bi his bedys side  
 And hym comaunded that he schulde a-byde  
 And seyde hym thus zif thow to morwe wende  
 Thow schat ben dreynk / myn tale is at an ende 4272  
 He wok & tolde / his felawe what he mette  
 And preyede hym his viage for to lette  
 As for that day he preyede hym for to a-bide  
 His felawe that lay bi his bedys syde 4276  
 Gan for to lauhe & skornde hym ful faste [leaf 366]  
 No drem quod he may so myn herte agaste  
 That I wele lette for to do myne thyngis  
 I sette not a straw / by thynne dremyngis 4280  
 ffor dremys been but uanyteis & Iapis  
 Men dreme al day of oulis & of apis  
 And of manye a mase there withal  
 Men dreme of thyng that neuere was ne schal 4284  
 But sithe I se that thow wild here a-byde  
 And thus for slouthen / wilfully thyn tyde  
 God wot it rewith me / & haue good day  
 And thus he tok his leue & wente his way 4288  
 But er that he hadde half his cours I-seyled  
 Not I not why / ne what myschaunce it eyled  
 But casewelly / the schipis boteme it rente  
 And schip & man vndyr the watyr wente 4292

In sight of othere schepis besyde  
 That with hem seyled at the morwe tyde  
 And therefore fayre pertelote so deere  
 By sweche ensaumplis olde mayst thow leere 4296  
 That no man schulde been so recheles  
 Of dremys for I seye the douteles  
 That manye a drem / ful soore is for to drede  
 Lo in the lyf of seynt kenelm I reede 4300  
 That was kenulphus sone the noble kyng  
 Of Merturyke how kenelm mette a thyng  
 A lite er he was mordered on a day  
 His mordere in his auysioun he say 4304  
 His noryce hym expoungnede euerydel  
 His sweuene / & bad hym / for to keepe hym weel  
 ffrom tresoun but he was but seuene 3eer old  
 And therfore lytil taale hath he told 4308  
 Of any drem so holy was his herte  
 By god I hadde leuere than myn scherte  
 That 3e hadde rad his legende as haue I  
 Dame pertelote I seye 3ow trewely 4312  
 Matrobeus that wret thanysioun  
 In Affryk of the worthi Ciprioun  
 Affermyth dremys & seyth that they been [leaf 308, back]  
 Warnynge of thyngis that men after seen 4316  
 And ferthere more I prey 3ow lokyth weel  
 In the olde testement of danyel  
 3if he helde dremys ony vanyte  
 Redyth ek of Iosep & there 3e schul se 4320  
 Wheree dremys ben sumtyme I seye nat alle  
 Warnynge of thyngis that schul after falle  
 Loke of Egip the kyng daun pharao  
 His bakere & his boteler also 4324  
 Wheree they ne feltyn non effect in dremys  
 Who so wele seke actis of sundery remys  
 May reede of dremys manye a sundery thyng  
 Lo Cresus that was of lide kyng 4328



Mette he nat how that he sat vp-on a tre  
 Whiche signefyed anhangid schulde bee  
 Lo heere Andromatha ectoris wif  
 That day that Ector schulde lese his lyf 4332  
 Sche dremede on the same nyght by-foren  
 How that the lyf of Ector schulde been loryn  
 ȝif thilke day he wente in-to batayle  
 Sche warnede hym but it myghte nat auayle 4336  
 He wente for to fyghte netheles  
 But he was slayn a-noon of Achilles  
 But tylke tale is al to long to telle  
 And ek it is nygh day I may nat dwelle 4340  
 Certeynly I seye as for conclusioun  
 That I schal han of this auysioun  
 Aduersite / & I seye ferthere-moore  
 That I ne telle of laxatyus no store 4344  
 ffor they been venimes I wot it weel  
 I hem defye I loue hem neuere a deel  
 Now lat vs speke of myrthe & stynte al this  
 Madame pertelote so haue I blys 4348  
 Of on thyng god hath sent me large grace  
 ffor whanne I se the beute in ȝoure face  
 ȝe been so skarlet red aboute ȝoure eyen  
 It makyth al myn dred / for to deyen 4352  
 ffor al so sekyr as In principio [leaf 360]  
 Mulier est homin[is] confusio  
 Madame the sentence of this latyn is  
 Woman is manys Ioye & al his blys 4356  
 ffor whan I fele a nyght ȝoure softe syde  
 Al be it that I may nat on ȝow ryde  
 ffor that oure perche is mad so narw allas  
 I am so ful of Ioye & of solas 4360  
 That I defye bothe sweuene & drem  
 And with th[a]t word he fley doun from the beem  
 ffor it was day & ek hise hennys alle  
 And with a chuk he gan hem for to calle 4364

ffor he hadde foundyn a corn lay in the 3erd  
 Royal he was he nas no moore aferyd  
 He feterede Pertelote twenty tyme  
 And trad as ofte er it was pryme 4368  
 He lokyth as it weere a grym lyoun  
 And on hise tois he romyth vp & doun  
 Hym deynyth nat to sette hise feet to grounde  
 He chukkith whan he hath a corn I-founde 4372  
 And to hym rennyn thanne hise wyuys alle  
 Thus royal as a prynce is in an halle  
 Leue I this chauntecleer in his pasture  
 And aftyr wele I telle his auenture 4376  
 ¶ Whan that the monythe / in which that the world began  
 That high[t]e March / whan god ferst makede man  
 Was compleet & passede weere also  
 Syn March bygan .30. dayis & two 4380  
 By-fel that chauntecleer in al his pryde  
 His seuene wyuys walkynge hym by-syde  
 Caste vp hire eyen to the bryghte sunne  
 That in the signe of taurus hadde I-roune 4384  
 Twenty degreis & on & sumwhat moore  
 And knew by kynde & by noon othir lore  
 That It was pryme & krew with b[l]ysful steuene  
 The sunne on heye is clombyn vp on heuene 4388  
 .90. degreis & on & moore I-wis  
 Madame pertelote myn wordelis blys  
 Herkenyth these blysful brydis how they synge [leaf 309, back]  
 And se the frosche flouris how they sprynge 4392  
 fful is myn herte of reuel & solas  
 But sodeynly hym fel a sorweful cas  
 ffor euere the lattere ende of Ioye is wo  
 God wot that wordely ioye / is soone ago 4396  
 And 3if a retor coude fayre endyte  
 He in a cronicle sauely myghte it wryte  
 As for a souereyn notabilyte  
 Now every wise man now herkene me 4400

This storye is also trewe I vndyrtake  
 As Is the bok of launcelot de lake  
 That women heelde in ful greet reuerence  
 Now wele I turne a-geyn to myn sentence 4404  
 A col fox ful of sly Iniquite  
 That in the groue hadde dwelled 3eris thre  
 By hygh Imaginacioun for-cast  
 The same nyght thour-out the hegis brast 4408  
 In-to the 3erd there chauntecleer the fayre  
 Was wont & ek hise wyuys to repayre  
 And In a bed of wortis styлле he lay  
 Til it was passed onderen of the day 4412  
 Waytynge his tyme on Chauntecleer to falle  
 As gladly doon these homycidis alle  
 That in a-wayt liggyn to morderen men  
 O false morderour lurkyng in thyn den 4416  
 O newe Scariot / newe Genysoun  
 ffalse dissimylour / O Grek Synoun  
 That broughtist Troye al vttyrly to sorwe  
 O Chauntecheer a-cursed be that morwe 4420  
 That thow in-to that 3erd / flaw from the bemys  
 Thow weere ful weel I-warnede be thynne dremys  
 That thilke day was perlyous to the  
 But what that god forwot mot nedis be 4424  
 Aftyr the opynioun of certeyn clerkis  
 Witnesse on hym that ony perfyt clerk is  
 That in scole is greet altercacioun  
 In this matiere & greet disputacioun 4428  
 And han been of an hunderede thousent men [leaf 370]  
 But I can not butte it to the breen  
 As can the holy doctour Augustyn  
 Or Boece or the bisshop Bradwardyn 4432  
 Whethir that goddys worthi forwetyng  
 Streynyth me nedely for to do that thyng  
 Needely clepe I symple necescite  
 Or ellis fre choys be grauntede me 4436

To do that same thyng or do it not  
 Thow god fore-wot it er that I was wrought  
 Or 3if his wetyng streynyth neuere a deel  
 But by necescite condiciounnel 4440  
 I wele not han to done of swich mateere  
 Myn tale is of a cok as 3e may here  
 That tok his conseyl of his wif with sorwe  
 To walkyn in the 3erd vp-on that morwe 4444  
 That he hadde met the drem that I 3ow tolde  
 Womenys conseylis been ful oftyn colde  
 Womenys conseylis broughte vs ferst to woo  
 And made Adam from paradys to go 4448  
 There as he was ful merye & weel at ese  
 But for I not to whom I myghte displese  
 3if I conseyl of women wolde blame  
 Passe ouyr for I seyde it in myn game 4452  
 Reede autouris where they trete of sweche matiere  
 And what they sey / of women / 3e may here  
 These been the cokkis wordis & nat myne  
 I can noon harm on no woman deuyne 4456  
 ffayre in the sond to bathe hire meryely  
 Lyth Pertelote & alle hire susteryn by  
 A-geyn the sunne & Chauntecleer so free  
 Song meryere than the mermeydyn in the se 4460  
 ffor phisiologus seyth sekyrly  
 How that they syngyn weel & meryely  
 And so be-fel that as he caste his yen  
 A-mong the wortis on a botyrflye 4464  
 He was war of this fox that lay ful lowe  
 No thyng ne lyste hym thanne for to crowe  
 But criede a-noon kok kok & vp he styrted [leaf 370, back]  
 As man that was afrayed in his herte 4468  
 ffor naturelly / a beste desirith fle  
 ffrom his contrarye / 3if he myghte it se  
 Thow he neuere erst hadde sey it with his Iye  
 ¶ This chauntecleer whan he gan hym espye 4472

He wolde a fled but that the fox a-noon  
 Seyde gentyl sire / allas whidyr wole 3e goon  
 Be 3e a frayd of me that am 3oure freend  
 Now certys I were werse than a feend 4476  
 3yf I to 3ow harm or velenye  
 I am nat come 3oure conseil for tespice  
 But trewely the cause of myn comynge  
 Was only for to herkene how that 3e synge 4480  
 ffor trewely 3e han so merie a steuene  
 As ony aungel hath that is in heuene  
 Therewith 3e han In musik moore felyng  
 Than hadde . boece . or ony that can syng 4484  
 Myn lord 3oure fadyr god his soule blys  
 And ek 3oure modyr of hire gentilles  
 Han in myn hous I-been to myn greete ese  
 But certys syre ful fayn wolde I 3ow please 4488  
 ¶ But for men speke of syngyng I wil seye  
 So mote I broukyn weel myn eyen tweye  
 Saue 3ow I herde neuere man so synge  
 As dede 3oure fadyr in the morwenynge 4492  
 Certis it was of herte al that he song  
 And for to make his voys the moore strong  
 He wolde peyne hym that with bothe hise eyen  
 He muste wynke so loude he muste cryen 4496  
 And stondyn on his typton therewithal  
 And streche forth his nekke long & smal  
 And ek he was of swich discrecyoun  
 That there was no man in no regioun 4500  
 That hym in song or wisdom myghte passe  
 I haue weel red in daun burnel the Asse  
 A-mong hise vers how that ther was a kok  
 ffor a prestis sone 3af hym a knok 4504  
 Vp-on his leg whil he was 3ond & nyce  
 [leaf 371]  
 He made hym for to lese his benefice  
 But certeyn there ne is no comparisoun  
 By-twixe the wisdom. & discrecioun 4508



Of *ȝoure* fadyr & of his subtiltee  
 Now syngith sere for seynte charite  
 Lat se cunne *ȝe ȝoure* fadyr countyrfete  
 This chauntecleer hise wyngis gan to beete 4512  
 As man that coude his tresoun nat aspye  
 So was he rauyschid with his flaterye  
 ¶ Allas *ȝe* lordis manye a flaterour  
 Is in *ȝoure* court & manye a losengeour 4516  
 That plesen *ȝow* weel more be myn fayth  
 Than he that sothfastmesse vn to *ȝow* sayth  
 Redyth ecclesiaste of flaterye  
 Beth war *ȝe* lordis of hire trecherye 4520  
 This Chauntecleer stood hye vp-on hise tois  
 Strechyng his neke & held his eyen clos  
 And gan to crowe loude for the nonys  
 And daun Ruseh the fox styrte vp at at anys 4524  
 And by the garget hente Chauntecleer  
 And on his bak to the wode hym beer  
 ffor *ȝit* there ne was no man that hym sewid  
 O destene that mayst nat been eschewid 4528  
 Allas that Chauntecleer fley from the bemys  
 Allas his wyf ne roughite nat of dremys  
 And on a fryday fil al this myschaunce  
 O *venus* that art goddesse of plesaunce 4532  
 Syn that thyn seruau<sup>n</sup>t was this chau[n]tecleer  
 And in thyn seruyse dede al his power  
 Moore for delyt than world to multeplye  
 Why woldist tow suffere hym on thyn day to deye 4536  
 O ganfryd deere maystyr souereyn  
 That whan thyn worthy kyng Richard was slayn  
 With schot compleynedist his deth so soore  
 Whi ne hadde I-nough thyn centence & thyn loore 4540  
 The fryday for to chide as dedyn *ȝe*  
 ffor on a fryday sothly slayn was he  
 • Thanne wolde I schewyn how that I coude pleyne [leaf 371, back]  
 ffor Chauntecleeres dreede & for his peyne 4544

¶ Certis swich cry ne lamentacioun  
 Was neuere of ladijs mad whan ylyoun  
 Was wone & Pirrus with his streyte swerd  
 Whan that he hadde hent kyng priame bi the berd 4548  
 And slayn hym as seyth vs Enidos  
 As madyn alle the hennys in the cloos  
 Whan they hadde of Chauntecler the syght  
 But souereynly dame Pertelote shryght 4552  
 fful loudere than dede Hasdrubalis wyf  
 Whan that hire husbonde hadde y-lost his lyf  
 And that the Romaynys haddyn brent Cartage  
 Sche was so ful of turnement & of rage 4556  
 That wilfully in-to the feer sche sterte  
 And brende hire seluyn with a stedefaste herte  
 O woful hennys ryght so cryedyn 3e  
 As whan that nero brende the Cete 4560  
 Of Rome cryedyn / Senatouris wyuys  
 ffor that here husbondys lostyn alle here lyuys  
 With-outyn gylt this Nero hath hem slayn  
 Now wole I turne to myn tale agayn 4564  
 ¶ The sely wedewe & ek here doughteryn two  
 Herdyn these hennys crye & makyn wo  
 And out at the dorys stirte they a-non  
 And seyen the fox toward the groue gon 4568  
 And bar vp-on his bak the Cok away  
 And cryedyn out harow & weyleawey  
 .Ha. ha. the fox & after hym they ran  
 And ek with stonys many a-nothir man 4572  
 Ran Colle oure doge & talbot & Garland  
 And Malkyn with a distaf in hire hand  
 Ran cow & Calf & ek the verray hoggis  
 ffor-fere for berkyng of the doggis 4576  
 And schoutyng of the men & women ek  
 They ronne so they thoute here herte brek  
 They 3elledyn as fendis doon in helle  
 The dokis cryedyn as men wolde hem quelle

[Leaf 372 of the  
 Cambr. MS is  
 cut out.]

[Out of the hyues/ come the swarme of bees/. [Harl. 1758, on l<sup>f</sup> 199]  
 The gees/ for feer/ flowyn ouyr/ the trees/.  
 So hidous/ was/ the nois/ a benedicite.  
 Certis/ he Iak/ strawe & his/ meyne. 4584  
 Ne made neuyr/ schoutis/ half so schrille.  
 When that thei wolde anye ffilemyng<sup>t</sup> kille.  
 As/ that/ ilke daie was/ made vp-on the ffox. [leaf 199]  
 Of/ bras/ thei broght<sup>t</sup> bemes/ & of box. 4588  
 Of horn & boon in whiche thei poupid.  
 And ther with aH/ thei schrichid & schoutid.  
 It<sup>t</sup> semyd as/ that/ heuyn schulde falle.  
 Now good men I praie you herkenyth alle. 4592  
 Lo how fortune turneth sodenlye.  
 The hope & eke pride of her/ enuye.  
 This/ Cok/ that<sup>t</sup> laie vp on the ffox bak<sup>t</sup>.  
 In aH his/ drede vn-to the ffox spak/. 4596  
 And seide sir/ if/ I were as/ ye.  
 Yet schulde I seie as/ wis/ god helpe me.  
 Turne a-yen ye proude chirles/ alle.  
 A verry pestilence vp-on you falle. 4600  
 Now am I come vn-to this/ Wode side.  
 Maugre your/ heed the Cok<sup>t</sup> schaff/ here a-bide.  
 I woH/ hym etc in feyth & that<sup>t</sup> a-non.  
 The ffox answerid in feith it<sup>t</sup> schaff be don. 4604  
 And he spak/ that<sup>t</sup> word aH/ sodenly.  
 This Cok brak/ fro his/ mouthe delyuerly.  
 And hye vp on a tre he flewe a non.  
 And when the ffox sawe that/ he was/ gon. 4608  
 Alas *quod* he O chauntecler/ allas/.  
 I haue *quod* he don to you trespas/.  
 In as/ meche as/ I made you a-ferde.  
 When I you hent<sup>t</sup> & broght<sup>t</sup> out/ of/ the yerde. 4612  
 But<sup>t</sup> sir/ I dide it<sup>t</sup> noght in no wicked entent/.  
 Cometh downe & I schaff/ telle you what<sup>t</sup> I ment<sup>t</sup>.  
 I schaff/ seie soth so god helpe me so.  
 Naie than *quod* he I schrewe vs/ bothe two. 4616

And first/ I schrewe my self bothe blood & bones/. [Harl. 1758.]

If thou be-gile me ofter/ than ones.

Thou schalt/ no more with thi flaterie.

Do me syngt & wynke with myn ye. 4620

ffor he that wynketh when he schulde se.

As/ wisly god lete hym neuyr/ the.

Naie quod the ffox god yeue hym myschaunce.

That is/ so vndiscrete of gouernaunce. 4624

That iangleth when he schulde haue pees/.

Lo suche is/ for to be recheles/.

And necligent/ & trusteth on flaterie.

But ye that/ holdyn this/ folie. 4628

As/ of a ffox of a Cok/ & of an hen.

Taketh the moralite good men.

ffor seynt Poule seith aȝ that writen is/.

To our/ doctryne it is/ writen y-wis/. 4632

Taketh the fruyt & letith the chaf be stille/.

Now good god if it be thi wille. [leaf 200]

As/ seith my lorde so make vs/ alle good men.

And bryngt vs/ alle to his/ hye blis/ amen. 4636

Here endith the/ tale/ of the Nonnes/ Preest/.] [Harl. 1758  
extract  
ends.]

[*The Manciple's Prologue follows in Harl. 1758, after a space of 28 lines in the middle of page 200.*]

# GROUP G. FRAGMENT VIII.

## § 1. THE SECOND NUN'S TALE.

### CAMBRIDGE MS.

#### [THE PROEM.]

[Here begynneth þe Prologge of þe Secound Nunne

[Sloane 1685, on lf 157, bk: no breaks  
between the stanzas in Sloane.]

(1)

**T**he mynystre of þe Noryce vnto vices. 1  
 whiche þat men clepen in englys ydylnesse  
 The portere of þe gate ys of delyces  
 To eschewe and by hir contraryry hym oppresse 4  
 þat ys to say by lefefulle besynesse [leaf 158]  
 wele ouzte we doñ oure entent  
 leste þat þe fende þorouze ydelnesse vs hent 7

(2)

ffor he þat with his þousand cordes sliȝ 8  
 Continuely vs awayteth to be-clappe  
 þan he may man in ydelnes aspye  
 he can so liztly cacche hym in his trappe 11  
 Tylle þat a man be hent rizt/ by þe lappe  
 he nys not ware þe fende haþe hym in honde  
 wele ouzt vs worche and ydelnesse with stonde] [Sloane 1685  
extract stops]

(3)

And thow men dreddyn neuere for to deyin [Camb. MS Gg. 4. 27,  
leaf 373]  
 ȝit seen men weel by resoun douteles  
 That ydilnesse is rote slogardye  
 Of whiche there neuere comyth encrees 18  
 And seen that slouthe hire holdyt in a lees  
 Only for to slepe & ete & drynke  
 And to deuoure al that othir swynke 21



## (4)

And for to putte vs from swich ydilnes	22
That cause is of so greet confusioun	
I haue here don myn feythful businesse	
Aftyr the legende in translacioun	25
Rygh of thyn glorious lyf & pascioun	.id est. cecilie
Thow with thyn garland wrogh[t] with rose & lilye	
Tho meene I mayde & martyr Seyn Cecyle	28

## (5)

And thow that flour of virgynis art alle	29
Of whom that bernard lyste so weel to write	
To the at myn begynnyng I leste to calle .i. ihesus [MS ihc]	
Thow confort of vs wrechis do me endite <sup>[later]</sup>	32
Thyn maydenys deth / that wan thour hire meryte	
The eternal lyf & ouyr the fend victorye	
As man may aftyr redyn in h[i]re storrye	35

## (6)

Thow maydyn & modyr doghtir of the sone	36
Thow welle of mercy synful soulys cure	
In whom that god of mercy ches to wone	
Thow humble & heig ouer euery creature	39
Thow nobledist so fer forth oure nature	
That no disdayn the makere hadde of kynde	
His sone in blood & flesch to clothe & wynde	42

## (7)

With-inne the cloystre blisful of thynne sydis	43
Tok mannys schap the eternal loue & pees	
That of the tryne cumpas lord & gide is	
Won heuene & se & erthe out of releas	46
Ay heryen & <sup>1</sup> thow virgyne wemmelees	[1 h altere]
Bar of thyn body & dweldist mayde pure	
The creatour of euery creature	49

## (8)

Assembled is in the magnyficence	[leaf 373, back]	50
With mercy goodnesse & swich pete		
That thow that art the sunne of excellence		
Nat only helpist hem that preyen the		53
But ofte tyme of thyn benygnetee		
fful frely er that men thyn helpe be-seche		
Thow gost by-forn & art oure lyuys leche		56

## (9)

Now help thow meke & blysfyl fayre mayde		57
Me flemede wreche in this desert of galle		
Thynk on the woman Canane that sayde	.i. Maria [later]	
That whelpis etyn some of the cromys alle		60
That from hire lordis table been I-falle		
And thow that I onworthi sone of eue		
Be synful ȝit accepte myn beleue		63

## (10)

And for that feyth is deed with outyn werkis		64
So for to werkyn ȝeue me wit & space		
That I be quyt from thens that most derk is		
O thow that art so fayr & ful of grace		67
Be myn aduocat in that hyge place		
Theere that withoutyn ende is sunge osanne		
Thow cristis modir doughtir deere of Anne <sup>1</sup>	[ <sup>1</sup> First anne]	

## (11)

And of thyn grace <sup>2</sup> myn soule in prisoun lighte	[ <sup>2</sup> corr.]	71
That troblid is bi the cogitacioun <sup>3</sup>	[ <sup>3</sup> as in Arch. Sold. B. 14]	
Of myn body & also by the whichte		
Of ertheli lust & fals affeccioun		74
O hauen of refut / O saluacioun		
Of hem that been in sorwe & in distresse		
Now help for to myn werk I wele me dresse		77

## (12)

3it preye ych <sup>1</sup>3ow þat<sup>1</sup> redyn that I wryte [<sup>1</sup>—<sup>1</sup> corrected] 78  
 ffor-3eue me that I do / no diligence  
 This ilke story / subtily tendite  
 ffor bothe haue I / the wordis & the sentence 81  
 Of hym that at the / seyntis reuerence  
 The storye wrot / & folwe hire legende  
 And preye 3ow that 3e / wele myn werk amende [*leaf 374 is out of the Camb. MS.*]

## (13) [THE TALE.]

[ffyrst wolle I you þe name of Seynt Cecile [Sloane 1685, on leaf 159]  
 Expoune as men may in hir stories see  
 hit ys to say on englysshe heuen lilie  
 Pure Chastnesse of Virginite 88  
 Or for she wytnesse hade of honeste  
 Of greue of conscience and of gode fame  
 The swoote sauoure lylic was hir name 91

## (14)

Other / Cecile ys to say þe wey to blynde 92  
 ffor she ensample was by god techynge  
 Or elles Ceciles as I wryten fynde  
 Is ioyned by manere comoyntyng 95  
 Of heuen and lya and hizer/ in figuryng  
 þe heuen ys . sette for þou3t of holynesse  
 And lya for hir lastyng besynesse 98

## (15)

Cecile may eke be sayde in þis manere 99  
 Wantynge hir blyndnesse for hir grete lizt  
 Of sapience for hir/ thewes clere  
 Or elles lo þis maydons name bri3t 102  
 Of/ heuen and loos comethe for whiche be ri3t  
 Men my3t þe heuen of peple hir/ calle  
 Ensampl of god and wyse werkis w<sup>ith</sup> alle 105

## (16)

ffor leos peple in Englyssh in to say	[Sloane 1695]	106
And riȝt/ as men may in þis heuen se		
The sonne and mone and sterres euery way		
Riȝt/ so gostely in þis mayden fre		109
Seyen þe feithe of Magnificence		
And eke of helthe and of sapience		
And sondry werkes briȝt of Excellence		112

## (17)

And riȝt as þe phylosophre wryte	[leaf 159, back]	113
þat heuen ys swyfte rounde and brennyng		
Riȝt so was fayre Cecile þe white		
fulle swyfte and besy euere in goode wirkyng		116
And rounde and hoole in goode perseueryng		
And brenne euere in Charite liȝt		
Nowe haue I declared you what she hiȝt		119

**Here endethe þe Prologge and begynneth þe tale**

## (18)

<b>T</b> his mayd bryȝt Cecile as hir/ lyf sayþe	120
Was comen of Romayns & of noble kynde	
And so forthe forstred vp in þe feiþe	
Of Cryst and bare his Gospel in hir mynde	123
Sche neuere sesede as I wryten fynde	
Of hir/ prayers but god to loue & drede	
Besechyng hym to kepen hir/ maydenhede	126

## (19)

And whan þis Mayde shulde vnto a man	127
y-wedded be þat was so ȝonge of age	
The whiche y-cleped was Valerian	
And þe day was come of/ hir/ maryage	130
She fulle deuoute and humble in hir corage	
Vnder hir robe of golde þat sat fulle fayre	
And nexte hir/ flesshe ycladde was in heyre	133

## (20)

And while þe Organes made melodye [Sloane 1695] 134  
 To god alle loue þus in hert sange she  
 O lord my saule and eke my body gye  
 Vnwemmed leste I confounded be 137  
 And for hys loue þat deyde vpon a tre  
 Euery second or þrid day she faste  
 Ay bydyng in hir Orisons fulle faste] [Sloane 1695 *extract stops*]

## (21)

<sup>1</sup>The nyght<sup>1</sup> cam & to bedde muste sche goon [Camb. MS Gg. 4. 27,  
 leaf 375]  
 With her husbond as ofte is the manner [1—1 rewritten by the  
 corrector?]  
 And preuily to hym sche saide A-noon<sup>1</sup>  
 O sweete & weel belouyd spouse deere 144  
 There is a conseyl & 3e wele it here  
 Whiche that rygh fayn I wolde vn-to 3ow seye  
 So that 3e swere 3e schul it nat bewreye 147

## (22)

Valerian gan faste vn-to hire swere 148  
 That for no cas ne thyng that myghte be  
 He schulde neueremore bewreyen hire  
 And thanne at erst to hym seyde sche 151  
 I haue an aungel whiche that louygh me  
 That with greet loue wheere so I wake or sleepe  
 Is redy ay myn body for to keepe 154

## (23)

But 3if that he m<sup>a</sup>y felyn out of dreede 155  
 That 3e me touche or loue in vilenye  
 He rygh a-noon wele sle 3ow with the dede  
 [And in your<sup>1</sup> yowthe thus ye shulden dye] [Harl. 7335, f 92, bk.  
 No gap in the Camb.  
 MS, but at the end of  
 the stanza there is  
 space for a line.]  
 And 3if that 3e in cleene lbue me gye  
 He wele 3ow loue as me for 3oure clenness  
 And schewe to 3ow his ioie & his bryghtnesse 161



## (24)

This valerian corektid as god wolde	162
Answerede a-geyn as I schal truste the	
Lat me that angel se & ek beholde	
And ȝif that it a verray aungel be	165
Thanne wele I doon as thow hast preyed me	
And ȝif thow loue a-nothir man forsothe	
Ryght with this swerd I wele sle ȝow bothe	168

## (25)

Cecyle answerede a-noon rygh in this wise	169
ȝif that ȝe lyste the aungel schal ȝe se	
So that ȝe trowe on cryst & ȝow baptyse	
Goth forth to via apia quod sche	172
That from this toun stant but mylis three	
And to the poure folkys that theere dwelle	
Seye hem righ as I schal ȝow telle	175

## (26)

Telle hem that I Cecile ȝow to hem sente	[leaf 375, back]
To shewyn ȝow the goode vrbān the olde	
ffor secre nedis & for good entente	
And whan that ȝe seynt vrbān han beholde	179
Telle hym the wordis whiche I to ȝow tolde	
And whan that he hath purgede ȝow from synne	
Thanne schal ȝe seen that aungel er ȝe twynne	182

## (27)

This valerian is to the place I-gon	183
And rygh as he was taught by his lernynge	
He fond this holye olde vrbān a-non	
A-mong the seyntis veryely lokynge	186
And he a-non with-oute tarynge	
Dede his massage & whan that he it tolde	
Vrbān for loye / hise handys gan vp holde	189

## (28)

The teeris from hise eyen leet he falle	190
Almyghty lord now Ihesu cryst quod he	
Sowere of chast conseyl / herde of vs alle	
The freut of thilke seed of chastite	193
That thow hast sowe in Cecyle take to the	
Lo lyk a bisy bee with-outyn gile	
The seruyth ay thyn owene thral Cecile	196

## (29)

ffor thilke spouse that sche tok but now	197
fful lik a feers <sup>1</sup> leoun / sche sendyth hire	[ <sup>1</sup> <i>first feeris</i> ]
As meke <sup>2</sup> as euere was ony lamb to 3ow	[ <sup>2</sup> <i>ke corrected</i> ]
And with that word a-noon there gan apeere	200
An old man clad in white clothis cleere	
That hadde a bok with lettere of gold in honde	
And gan byforn valeryan to stonde	203

## (30)

Valerian as deed fil down for dreede	204
Whan he hym saw / & he vp hente hym tho	
And on his bok rygh thus he gan to reede	
O lord o god o feith with-outyn mo	207
O cristendom & fadyr of alle also	
Abouyn alle & ouer alle euerywhere	
These wordys alle of gold I-wretyn weere	210

## (31)

Whanne this was rad thanne seyde this olde man	[leaf 376]
Leuyst this thyng or no sey 3e or nay	
I leue al this thyng quod Valeryan	
ffor sothere thyng this / I dar weel say	214
Vndyr the heuene no wight thynkyn may	
Tho vaneschid this olde man he nyste where	
And Poope vrbán hym cristenede ryght there	217

## (32)

Valarian goth hom & fynd Cecile	218
In-with his chambir with an Au[n]gel stonde	
This aungel hadde of rosis & of lylie	
Corounys two the whiche he bar in honde	221
And fyrst to cecilie as I vndirstonde	
He ȝaf that on & aftyr gan he take	
That othir to valeryan hire make	224

## (33)

With body cleene & with vnwemmede thought	225
Kepith ay cleene these coronys quod he	
ffrom paradys to ȝow / I haue hem brought	
Ne neuere mo ne schal they rote be	228
Ne leese here sote sauour trustith me	
Ne neuere wigh schal seen hem with his ye	
But he be chast & haate vilenye	231

## (34)

And thow Valerian for thow so soone	232
Assentedist to good conseyl also	
Sey what the lyste & thow schat haue thyn boone	
I haue a brothir quod valeryan tho	235
That in this world I loue no man so	
I preye ȝow that myn brothir may han grace	
To knowe the trouthe as I do in this place	238

## (35)

The aungel seyde god lykyth thyn requeste	239
And bothe with the palm of martyrdom	
ȝe schul come vn-tyl his blysfyl feste	
And with that word Tiburse his brothyr coom	242
And whan that he the sauour Vndyrnom	
Which that the rosis & the lylis caste	
With-inne his herte he gan to wondere faste	245

## (36)

And seyde I wondere this tyme of the ȝeer [leaf 376, back]  
 Whens that the sote sauour comyth so  
 Of rose & lylyis / that I smelle heere /  
 ffor thow I hadde hem in myne handis two 249  
 The sauour myghte in me no deppere go  
 The swete smel that in myn herte I fynde  
 Hath chaunged me al in a nothir kynde 252

## (37)

Valerian seyde two corounys han we 253  
 Snow whit & rose reed that schynyn cleere  
 Whiche that thynne eyne han no myght to se  
 And as thow smellyst hem thour myn preyere 256  
 So schalt thow seen hem leue brothir deere  
 ȝif it so be thow wolt with-outyn slouthe  
 Byleue arygh & knowyn werray trouthe 259

## (38)

Tiburse answerde seyst thow this to me 260  
 In sothnesse or in drem I herkene this  
 In dremys quod Valerian haue we be  
 Vn-to this tyme brothir myn I-wis 263  
 But now at erst in trouthe oure dwellynge is  
 How wost thow this quod Tiburce & in what wyse  
 Quod valerian that schal I the deuyse 266

## (39)

The Au[n]gel of god hath me the trouthe taught 267  
 Which thow schalt se ȝif that thow wilt reneye  
 Thyne Idolis & been cleene & ellis not  
 And of the myrakele of these coronys tweye 270  
 Seynt Ambrose in his prefas leste to seye  
 Solempnely this noble doughtyr dere  
 Commendyth it & seyth in this maneere 273

## (40)

The palme of marterdam for to reseeyue	274
Seynt Secile fulfild of godis 3ifte	
The world & ek hire <sup>1</sup> chambre gan sche weyue	[ <sup>1</sup> <i>first</i> hise]
Witnesse Tiburce & Cecilies schryfte	277
To whiche god of his bounte wolde shifte	
Corounnys two of flouris sweete smellynge	
And made his aungel hem the corounnys to brynge	280

## (41)

This maydyn hath brought hem to blysse a-boue	[leaf 377]
The world hat wist / what it is wroth certeyn	
Deuocioun of chastite to loue	
The schewede hym Cecile al opyn & pleyn	284
That alle ydolis nys but a thyng in veyn	
ffor they been dombe & therto they been deeu	
And chargede hym hise ydolis for to leue	287

## (42)

Who so that trowith not this a beste he is	288
Quod tho tyburse 3if that I schal nat lye	
And sche gan kisse his brest that herde this	
And was ful glad he coude trouthe espye	291
This day I take the for myn alye	
Seyde this blysfyl fayre mayde deere	
And aftyr that sche seyde as 3e may here	294

## (43)

Lo right so as the loue of Crist quod she	295
Made me thyn brothir wif rygh in that wise	
A-noon for myn alye I here take the	
So that thou wolt thyne ydolis espie	298
Go with thyn brothir now & the baptyse	
And make the clene so that thou mowe be-holde	
The aungellis face of which then brothir tolde	301



## (44)

Tyburce answerde & seyde brothir deere	302
ffyrst telle me whidyr that I schal & to what man	
To whom quod he come forth with rygh good cheere	
I wele the lede vn-to the pope vrban	305
Tyl vrban brothir myn valerian	
Quod tho Tiburce / wilt thow me dedyr leede	
Me thynkyth that it were a wondyr deede	308

## (45)

Ne knowyst tow nat vrban quod he tho	309
That is so ofte dampned to be deed	
And wonyth in halkis alwey two & fro	
And dar nat onys putte forth his heed	312
Men schulde hym brenne in a fyr so reed	
3if he were founde or 3if men myghte hym spy	
And we also to bere hym compaynye <sup>1</sup> [o attene]	315

## (46)

And whil we seke thilke dyuinite	[leaf 377, back]
That is I-hid in heuene pryuyly	
Algate I-brend in this world schul we be	
To whom Cecile answerde boldely	319
Men myghtyn dredyn weel & skylfully	
This lif to lese myn owene dere brothir	
If this weere lyuyng only & non othir	322

## (47)

But there is betere lyf in othir place	323
That neuere schal been lost ne drede the not	
With godys sone / vs tolde thour his grace	
That faderis sone hath alle thyngis wrouzt	326
And al that wrouzt is with a skylful thouzt	
The gost that from the fadyr gan procede	
IIath soulede hem with-outyn ony dreede	329

## (48)

By word & by myrakele he goddis sone 330  
 Whan he was in this world declared heere  
 That there is othir lyf / theere men may wone  
 To whom answerde Tiburce o sistyr deere 333  
 Ne seydist tow right now in this maneere  
 There nys but on god / in sothfastnesse  
 And now of thre / how maystow bere witnesse 336

## (49)

That schal I telle quod sche er <sup>1</sup>than I<sup>1</sup> go [1—1 altered] 337  
 Ryght as a man hath sapiencis thre  
 Memorye engyn & intellect also  
 So in o beyinge of dyuynytee 340  
 Thre personys may theere weel bee  
 Tho gan sche hym ful busili to preche  
 Of Cristis sone & of hise peynys teche 343

## (50)

And manye poyntis of hise passioun 344  
 How goddis sone in this world was with-holde  
 To doon mankynde pleyn remyssioun  
 That was I-boundyn in synne & caris colde 347  
 Al this thyng sche vn-to tiburce tolde  
 And aftyr this Thiburce with good entente  
 With valerian to pope vrban he wente 350

## (51)

That thanked god & with good herte & lyght [leaf 378]  
 He cristenede hym & made hym in that place  
 Parfit in his lernynge goddis knyght  
 And aftyr this Tibur[c]e gat swich grace 354  
 That eueri day he saw in tyme & space  
 The aungel of god & euery manere boone  
 That he god axed it was sped ful soone 357

## (52)

It weere ful hard by ordere for to seyn	358
How manye wonderis Ihesu for hem wroughte	
But at the laste to tellyn schort & pleyne	
The sergeauntis of the toun of rome hem souzte	361
And hem by-forn almache the prefect broughte	
Which hem opposede & knew al hire entente	
And to the ymage of Iupiter hem sente.—	364

## (53)

And seyde ho so wele not sacrifice	365
Swap of his heed this myn centence heere	
Anoon these martiris that I ȝow deuyse	
On Maximus that was an officeere	368
Of the Prefectis & his Corniculeere	
Hem hente & whan he forth the seyntis ladde	
Hym self he wepte for pite that he hadde	371

## (54)

Whan Maximus hadde herd the seyntis loore	372
He gat hym of the turmentouris leewe	
And ladde hem to his hous with-outyn moore	
And with heere prechyng er than it was eue	375
They gunne from the turmentouris to reue	
And from Maxime & from hise folk echoone	
The false feith to trowe in god a-loone	378

## (55)

Cecile cam whan it was wexe nyght	379
With prestis that hem cristenede alle in feere	
And aftyward whan day was wexen lyght	
Cecile hem seyde with a ful sobere cheere	382
Now cristis owene knyghtis leue & deere	
Cast al a-wey the werkis of derknesse	
And armyth ȝow in armys / of brightnesse.	385

## (56)

3e han forsothe don a greet batayle / [leaf 378, back] 386  
 3oure cours is don / 3oure feyth haue 3e conseruyd  
 Goth to the coroun of lyf that may nat fayle  
 The rightful Iuge / which that 3e han seruyd 389  
 Schal 3eue it 3ow right as 3e han 'seruyd [<sup>1</sup> dis in the margin]  
 And whan this thyng was seyde as I deuysed  
 Men ledde hem forth / to don the sacrificise 392

## (57)

But whan they weere to the place brought 393  
 To tellyn schortely the conclusioun  
 The nolde encense<sup>2</sup> ne sacrificise right noght [<sup>2</sup> first ensense]  
 But on here kneis they settyn hem a-doun 396  
 With humble herte & sad deuocioun  
 And leftyn bothe here heuedis in the place  
 Here soulis wentyn to the kyng of grace 399

## (58)

This Maximus that saw this thyng betyde 400  
 With pituse teris tolde it a-non right  
 That he here soulis saw to heuene glyde  
 With aungellis ful of cleernesse & of ligh 403  
 And with his word conuertede manye a wight  
 for whiche Almachius dide hym so beete  
 With whippe of leed til he his lyf gan lete 406

## (59)

Cecile hym tok & buried a-non 407  
 Bi Tiburce & Valirian softly  
 With-inne hire buriinge place vndyr the stoon  
 And after this Almathius hastili 410  
 Bad hise mynystres fightyn opynly  
 Cecile so that sche myghte in hise presence  
 Don sacrificise & Iupiter encence 413

## (60)

But they conuertid at here wise loore	414
Weptyn ful soore & 3euy <sup>n</sup> ful credence	
Vn-to hire word & cryedyn moore & moore	
Crist goddis sone with-outyn difference	417
Is verray goddys sone this al oure centence	
That hath so good a seruaunt hym to serue	
This with on vois we trowyn thow we sterue	420

## (61)

Almachius that herde al this doing	[leaf 379]	421
Bad feche Cecile that he myghte hire se		
And aldyr ferst lo this was his axsyng		
What manere woman art thou quod he		424
I am a gentil woman born quod sche		
I axe the quod he thou it the greeue		
Of thyn religioun & of thin beleue		427

## (62)

3e han begunne 3oure questioun folylly	428
Quod sche that woldyn to answeris conclude	
In on demaunde 3e axsyn lewedely	
Almache answered vnto that simylitude	431
Of whens comyth thyn ansverynge so rude	
Of whens quod sche / whan that sche was freynynd	
Of concience & of good feyth vnfeynynd	434

## (63)

Almachius seyde ne takist thou noon hede	435
Of myn powere & sche answerde him thus	
3oure myght quod sche ful lytil is to drede	
ffor euery manys mortal power nys	438
But lyk a bladdere ful of wynd I-wis	
ffor with a nedellis poynt whan it is blowe	
May al the bost of it been leyd ful lowe	441



## (64)

fful wrongfully bigunne thow quod sche	442
And 3it in wrong is al thyn perseueraunce	
Wost tow not how oure myghti pryncis free	
Han thus comaundit & mad ordenaunce	445
That euery cristene whight schal han penaunce	
But 3if that he his cristendom withseye	
And goon al quik 3if he wele it reneye	448

## (65)

3oure pryncis erryn as 3oure nobleye doth	449
Quod tho Cecile / & with a wood centence	
3e makyn vs gilty & is nat soth	
ffor 3e that knowyn weel oure Innocence	452
ffor as meche as we doon a reuerence	
To Cryst & for we bere a cristene name	
3e puttyn on vs a cryme & ek a blame	455

## (66)

But we that knowen thilke name	[leaf 379, back]	456
ffor vertuous we may it not with-seye		
Almache answerde chees on of these two		
Do sacrificse & cristendam reneye		459
That thow mowe escape by that weye		
At which this holy blysful fayre mayde		
Gan for to laughe & to the Iuge sayde		462

## (67)

O Iuge confus in thyn nycete	463
Wilt thow that I reneye Innocence	
To makyn me a wikkede wight quod sche	
Lo he dissimulyth here in audience	466
He starith & wodit in hise aduertence	
To whom Almachius onsely wreche	
Ne wost thow not how fer <sup>myn</sup> mygh may streche	469

## (68)

Han not oure mighti pryncis to me ȝeuyñ	470
ȝe boothe power & autorite	
To makyn folk to deyñ or to leuyñ	
Whi spekist thou so proudely thanne to me	473
I speke noght but stedefastly quod sche	
Nat proudely I seye as for myñ side	
We hatyn dedly thilke vyce of pryde—	476

## (69)

And ȝif thou dreede nat a soth to heere	477
Thanne wele I schewe al opynly be ryght	
That thou hast mad a ful greet lesyng heere	
Thow seyst thynne pryncis han the ȝouyn myght	480
Bothe for to slen & for to quekyn a wight	
Thow that ne mayst but only lyf bereue	
Thow hast non othir power ne no leue	483

## (70)

But thou mayst seyn thynne pryncis han the makid	484
Ministre of deth / for ȝif thou speke of mo	
Thow lyst for thyn power is ful nakyd	
Do wey thyn boldenesse seyde Almathius thoo	487
And sacrificise to the goddis er thou go	
I reche nat what wrong that thou me profere	
ffor I can suffere it as a Philisophere	490

## (71)

But thilke wrongis may I not endure	[leaf 380] 491
That thou spekist of oure goddis heere quod he	
Cecile answerde o nyce creature	
Thow seydist no word syn thou spake with me	494
That I ne knew therwith thyn nycetee	
And that thou were in euery maner wise	
A lewede offiser & veyn Iustise	497

## (72)

Teere lakkyth no thyng to thyn vtter Iyen	498
That thow nart blynd / for thyng that we seen alle	
That is a stoon that men may wel espyen	
That ilke stoon a god thow wilt it calle	501
I rede the let thyn hond vp-on it falle	
And taste it weel & ston thow schalt it fynde	
Syn that thow sest nat with thynne cyin blynde	504

## (73)

It is schame that the peple schal	505
So scorne the & laghe at thyn folye	
ffor comounly men wot it weel oueral	
That myghty god is in hise heuenys hye	508
And these ymagis weel thow mayst espie	
To the ne to hem self may nought profyghte	
ffor in effect they been nat worth a myghte	511

## (74)

These wordis & swiche othere seyde sche	512
And he wex wroth & bad men schulde hire leede	
Hom to hire hous / & in hire hous quod he	
Brenne hire right in a bath with flambis reede	515
And as he bad ryȝt so was doon the dede	
ffor in a bath the gune hire faste schette	
And nygh & day greet fyr they vndyr bette	518

## (75)

The longe nyght & ek a day also	519
ffor al the feer & ek the bathis heete	
Sche sat al cold & felede no woo	
It made hire not a drope for to sweete	522
But in that bath hire lyf muste sche lete	
ffor he Almachi <sup>us</sup> with a wekkede entent	
To sleen hire in the bath his sonde sent/	525

## (76)

Thre strokis in the nekke he smoot hire tho [leaf 380, back]  
 The turmentour but for no manere chaunce  
 He myghte nat smyte al hire nekke a two  
 And for there was that tyme an ordynaunce 529  
 That no man schulde doon / man swich penaunce  
 The fourte strook to smyte soffte or sore  
 This turmentour ne durste doon no moore 532

## (77)

But half deed with hire nekke I-koruyn theere 533  
 He lefte hire lye / & on his woye is went  
 The cristene folk whiche that a-boute hire weere  
 With scheetis han the blood ful fayre I-hent 536  
 Thre dayis leuede sche in that turnement  
 And neuere sesede hem the feyth to teche  
 That sche hadde fosterede hem sche gan to preche 539

## (78)

And hem sche 3af hire meoblis & hire thyng 540  
 And to the Poope Vrban bi-tok hem tho  
 And seyde I axede this of heuene kyng  
 To haue thre dayis respit & namo 543  
 To recommede to 3ow / er that I go  
 These soulis lo & that I myghte do werche  
 Heere of myn hous perpetuely a cherche 546

## (79)

Seynt vrban with hise dekenys priuily 547  
 The body fette & beriede it be nyght  
 Among hise othere seyntis honestely  
 Hyre hous the cherche of seynt cecile hyghte 550  
 Seynt Vrban halwede it as he weel myght  
 In which in to this day in noble wyse  
 Meen don to Cryst & to his seynt seruyse 553

**Here folwyn the mery wordys of chaucer & of þ<sup>e</sup> host  
And the prologe of the chanonnys man** [on leaf 380, back]

hat told was the lif of seynt Cecile [leaf 381]  
 [¹ Er w]e fully haddyn redyn fyue myle [¹ gaps filled-in from  
Sloane 1685, leaf 165,  
except that at ² it has  
"Boxton."]  
 [At ² Boug]hton vndyr Blee vs gan a take  
 [ A man] that clothede was in clothis blake 557  
 [And vn]dyr that he hadde a whit surplys  
 [hys ha]keny that was al pomele gris  
 [So swa]tte that it wondir was to se  
 [hit seme]de that he hadde prekede mylis thre 561  
 [The hors eke þat hys yoman r]od vpon  
 [So swet þat vnneþe my]hte³ it goon [³ "myȝt," in Sloane 1685]  
 Aboute þe pey[trelle stode the] fom ful hye  
 He was of foom al flekked as a pye 565  
 A male twifold on his croper lay  
 It semede that he cariede lyte aray  
 Al lygh for somyr rod this worthi man  
 And in myn herte wonderyn I began 569  
 What that he was that I vndyrstood  
 How that his cloke was sowid to his hood  
 ffor which whanne I longe hadde auysede me  
 I demede hym ⁊ schanoun for to be 573  
 His hat hyng doun at his bak by a lace  
 ffor he hadde redyn moore than trot or pace  
 He hadde ay prikyd lyk as he were wood  
 A cloote lef he hadde vndyr his hood 577  
 ffro swot & for to kepe his heed from heete  
 But it was Ioye for to seen hym sweete  
 His forhed dropped as a stillatorie  
 Were ful of plauntayn & of permytorte 581



And whan that he was come he gan to crye 582  
 God saue quod he this fayre compaynye  
 ffaste haue I prikyd quod he for 3oure sake  
 By cause that I wolde 3ow a take 585  
 To rydyn in this murye cumpaynye  
 His 3eman ek was ful of curteysie  
 And seyde sens now in the morwe tyde  
 Out of 3oure hostelrye I saw 3ow ryde 589  
 And warnede heere myn lord & myn souereyn  
 Which for to ridyn with 3ow is ful fayn  
 ffor his disport he lout[h<sup>1</sup> dalyaunce] [leaf 381, back]  
 ffireend for thyn warny[nge god 3eue þe gode chaunce] 593  
 Thanne seyde oure h[Oste certes hit wolde seme] [<sup>1</sup> gaps filled-in  
from *Stoane*  
1685]  
 Thyn lord weere w[yse and so I may wele deme]  
 He is ful Iocunde a[lso dare I leye]  
 Can he ough a me[ry tale or tweye] 597  
 With which he glade [may pis companye]  
 // Who sere myn lord [3e with out lie]  
 He can of merthe & [eke of Iolyte]  
 Nat but I-now also [sir trestyth me] 601  
 And 3e hym knewe a[lso wele as] that do I  
 3e woldyn wondere how weel & craftyly  
 He coude werke & that in sundery wise  
 He hath takyn on hym manye a greet emprise 605  
 Whiche were ful hard for ony that is heere  
 To brynge a-boute but <sup>2</sup>they of hym it leere <sup>2</sup> [2-2 later]  
 As hoomeyly as he rit a-mongis 3ow  
 3if 3e hym knewe it wolde be for 3oure prow 609  
 3e wolde nat forgoon his aqueyntaunce  
 ffor meche good I dare leye in balaunce  
 Al that I haue in myn possessioun  
 He is a man of heigh discrecioun 613  
 I warne 3ow weel he is a passynge man  
 Weel quod oure host I preye the telle me than  
 Is he clerk or noon I preye the telle me this  
 Nay he is grettere than a clerk I-wis 617

Seyde this ȝeman & in wordis fewe 618  
 Hoost of his craft sumwhat I wele ȝow schewe  
 I seye myn lord can swich sotyletee  
 But al his craft ȝe may nat wete at me 621  
 And sumwhat helpe I ȝit to his werkyng  
 That al this ground on which we been rydyng  
 Til that we comyn to cauntyrbery toun  
 He coude al clene turne vp so doun 625  
 And paue it al of syluyr & of gold /  
 And whan this ȝeman hadde this I-told  
 Vn-to oure host he seyde benedicite  
 This thyng is wondyr meruelious to me 629  
 Syn that thyn lord is of so hegh prudence [leaf 382]  
 By cause of which men wolde hym reuerence  
 That of his worschepe rekkith he but lyte  
 His ouere sloppe nys nat worth a myte 633  
 As in effect to hym so mote I go  
 It is al baudit & to-tore also  
 Whi is thyn lord so slottysch I the preye  
 And is of power betere cloth to beye 637  
 If that his deede a-cordit with his speche  
 Tel me that & that I the be-seche  
 // Whi quod this ȝeman wherto axe ȝe me  
 God help me so for he schal neuere the 641  
 But I wele nat a-wowe that I seye  
 And therfore kepe it secre I ȝow preye  
 He is to wis in feyth as I be-leue  
 That is ouerdone it wele nat preue 645  
 Aryght / as clerkis seyn it is a vice  
 Wherefore in that I helde hym lewid & nyce  
 ffor whan a man hath ouergreet a wit  
 fful ofte hym happith to mysusen it 649  
 So doth myn lord & that me greuyth soore  
 God it amende I can sey ȝow na moore  
 Therof no fors goode ȝeman quod oure hoost  
 Syn of the cunnyng of thyn lord thow wost 653

Telle how he doth I preye the hertyly 654  
 Syn that he is so crafty & so sly  
 Wheere dwellyn 3e / 3if it to tellyn be  
 In the subarblis of a toun quod he 657  
 Lurkyng in hernys & in <sup>1</sup>lanys blynde [1 *first lonys*]  
 Where as these robbouris & these theuys by kynde  
 Holdyn here priue ferful residence  
 As they that dore nat schewe here presence 661  
 So fare we 3if I schal seye the sothe  
 Now quod oure hoost 3it lat me speke to the  
 Whi art thou so discolouryd in thyn face  
 Petir quod he god 3eue it harde grace 665  
 I am so vsed in the fuir to blowe  
 That it hath chaunged myn colour I trowe  
 I am not wone in no myrour to pryе [leaf 382, back]  
 But swynke sore & lerne multeplye 669  
 We blundere euere & poure in the fuyr  
 And for al that we fayle of oure desyr  
 ffor euere we lakke oure conclusioun  
 To muche folk we doon illusyoun 673  
 And borwe gold be it a pound or two  
 Or ten or twelve or manye summys mo  
 And makyn hem to wenyn at the leste weye  
 That of a pound we coudyn make tweye 677  
 3it is it fals but ay we han good hope  
 It for to doon & aftyr it we grope  
 But that science is so fer vs be-foren  
 We mow not al-thogh we haddyn it sworn 681  
 It ouyrtake it slyt away so faste  
 It wele vs make beggeris at the laste  
 // Whil this 3eman was thus in his talkyng  
 This chanoun drow hym neer & herde alle thyng 685  
 Which this 3eman spak . for suspecioun  
 Of menys speche / euere hadde this chanoun  
 for Catoun seyth he that gilty is *Concise esse sibi.*  
 Demyth alle thyng is seyde of hym I-wis 689

That was the cause he gan so nygh hym drawe 690  
 To his ȝeman to herkenyn al his sawe  
 And thus he seyde vn-to his ȝeman tho  
 Hold thow thyn pees & spek no wordis mo 693  
 ffor ȝif thow do thow schat it dere a-beye  
 Thow slaundryst me / heere in this cumpaynye  
 And ek discouerist that thow schuldist hide  
 Ȝa quod oure ost telle on whatso betyde 697  
 Of al this thretyng relke nat a myte  
 Infeyth quod he namore I do but lyte  
 And whan this chanoun saw it wolde nat be  
 But his ȝeman wolde telle his pruyte 701  
 He fledde a-vey-for verray sorwe & schame  
 A quod the ȝeman here schal aryse game  
 Al that I can a-non now wele I telle 704  
 Syn he is goon the foule fend hym quelle [Leaf 388 cut out of the Camb. MS.]  
 [ffore neuere here aftere wolle with hym mete [Sloane 1685, leaf 167, back]  
 ffor peny ne for pounde I be-hete  
 he þat me brouȝt/ fyrst/ in to þat game  
 Er/ þat he deyde sorowe haue he & shame 709  
 ffor hit ys earnest/ to me by my fayþe  
 þat fele I wele what so ony man saythe  
 And ȝit for alle my smert' and alle my greef /  
 And alle my sorowe laboure and myschef 713  
 I couþe neuere leue hit / in no wyse  
 Nowe wolde god my wytte myȝt / suffice  
 To tellen alle þat longethe to þat arte  
 But nathles ȝit wylle I telle you part 717  
 Syþens þat my lorde ys gone I wolle not spare  
 Suche þenge as I knowe I wille declare

Here endith þe Prologge

## [THE PREAMBLE.]

[Sloane 1685, on leaf 167, back.]

## and be-gynneþe þe tale

W yth þis Chanon dwellyd haue I seuen 3eere  
 And of hys science neuere þe nere 721  
 And þat I hade I haue loste þerby  
 And god woote so hathe mony mo þan I

There I was wonte to be riȝt fresshe & gay  
 Of cloþinge and of gode array 725

Nowe may I were añ hose vpon myne hede  
 And where my coloure was bothe fressh & reede  
 Nowe it ys wan and of a len hewe  
 Who so hit vseþe sore shalle he rewe 729

And of my swynke blered ys myn eyee  
 Lo whiche avauntage hit ys to multiply  
 þat slydyng science hathe me made so bare  
 That I haue no gode where þat euere I fare 733

And ȝit / I am endetted so þer by  
 Of golde þat I haue borrowed truly  
 þat whyle I lyue hit/ shalle I quyte neuere  
 lat euery man by ware by me for euere 737

what manere man þat casteth hym þer to  
 yf/ he contynewe I holde hys thryfte y-do.

[But so helpe me god ther/-by schaff he noght wyne.  
 But empten his/ purs/ & make his/ wittis/ thynne. 741

And whan he thorough his/ madnesse & folye/  
 Hath lost his/ owne good thorough iopardye.  
 Than he exitith other/ men therto. 744

To lese her/ good as/ hym self hap do.] [Harl. 1758, leaf 145]  
 ffor vnto shrewes Ioye hit ys and ese [leaf 168]

To haue hir/ felawes in peyne and disese



Thys was I oones lerned of a Clerke [Sloane 1685]  
 Of þat no Charge I wolde speke of oure werke 749  
 whan we bene þere as we shaft exercise  
 Oure Eluysshe crafte we seem wonder/ wyse  
 Oure termes ben so clerghal and so queynte  
 I blowe þe fyre tylle þat myn hert/ feynte 753  
 what/ shulde I telle ecche proporcoun  
 Of/ þenges whiche þat we worchen vppoun  
 As on fyue or sixe vnces may wele be 756  
 Of siluere or of soȝn opere quantite] [Sloane 1685 extract ends]  
 And besye me to telle ȝow the namys [Camb. MS Gg. 4. 27,  
leaf 384]  
 Of orpemynt brend bonys / Iren squamys  
 That in to poudere grounde been ful smal  
 And in an erthene pot how put is al 761  
 And salt I-put in & also papeer  
 By-fore these poudervis that I speke of heer  
 And weel I-keuered with a laumpe of glas  
 And of muche othir thyng whiche there was 765  
 And of the pot & glasis enlutyng  
 That of the ayr myghte passe out nothyng  
 And of the esy fuyr & smert also  
 Whiche that was mad & the care & wo 769  
 That we hadde in oure mateeris sublymyng  
 And in a-malgamyng & calcenyng  
 Of quik siluyr I-clepede Mercurye Crude  
 ffor alle oure slytis we kunne not conclude 773  
 Of oure orpemynt & sublimyd mercurye  
 Oure groundyn lytarge ek & the porphurye  
 Of eche of these / of ounces a certeyn  
 Noght helpith vs oure labour is in veyn 777  
 Ne ek oure spiritis ascencioun  
 Ne oure matieris that lyn al fyx a-doun  
 Mowe in oure werkyng no thyng vs awayle  
 ffor lost is al oure labour & trauayle 781  
 And al the cost a twenty deuelleweye  
 Is lost also which we on it leye

Ther is also ful manye anothir thyng  
 That is vnto oure craft aperteynynge 785  
 Thow I be ordere / hem nat reherce can  
 By cause that I am a lewede man  
 That wele I telle hem as they come in mynde  
 Thow I ne can nat sette hem in hir<sup>1</sup> kynde [<sup>1</sup> h r altered] 789  
 As bole armonyak verdegres boras  
 And sunderi vessellys mad of erthe & glas  
 Oure vrynallis & oure discensories  
 Violys / Crosletis / & sublymatories 793  
 Cucurbites / & alembikes eek  
 And othere swiche / deere I-nogh a leek  
 Not nedyth it for to reherse hem alle [leaf 384, back]  
 Wateris rubifynge & bolis galle 797  
 Arsenyk Salarmoniak & bronston  
 And erbis coude I telle ek manyon  
 Of Egremoyne Walerian & lunarye  
 And othere sweche / If that me leste tarye 801  
 Oure laumpis brennynge bothe nygh<sup>t</sup> & day  
 To brynge aboute oure craft 3if that we may  
 Oure furneys ek of Calcinacioun  
 And of oure wateris albifacacioun 805  
 Vnslekkid lym chalk & gleyer of an ey  
 Pouderis dyuerce Aschis donge / pisse & cley  
 Cerede pokettis Sal petyr vitriole  
 And dyuerse feris mad of wode & cole 809  
 Sal tartere altaly / And Sal preparaat  
 And combust matiers / & coagulaat  
 Cley mad with hors heer or manis & oyle  
 Of Tartere Alumglas. berme wort & argoyle 813  
 Rosealger & othere matieris enbibyng  
 And ek of othere matieris / encorporyng  
 And of oure siluyr citrynacioun  
 Oure cymentyng / & formentacyoun 817  
 Oure ingotis testis & manyon mo  
 I wele 3ow telle as was me taught also

// The foure spiritis & the bodyis seuene  
 By ordere As ofte herde I myn lord hem nemene 821  
 The fyrste spirit quik siluys callid is  
 The secunde orpemynt & the thredde I-wis  
 Sal Armonyak & the fourte brunston  
 The bodyis seuene lo hem ek here a-non 825  
 Sol gold is & luna syluyr whe treepe  
 Mars yryn . Mercurie quik siluyr we clepe  
 Saturnus led & Iupiter is tyn  
 And Venus Copir be myn fadir kyn 829  
 This cursede craft who so wele excerceyse  
 He schal no good han that hym may suffyse  
 ffor al the good he spendyth there aboute  
 He lese schal therof haue I no doute 833  
 Ho so that lystyth outyn his folye [leaf 385]  
 Let hym come forth & lerne multeplye  
 And euery man that hat ought in his cofere  
 Lat hym apere & wexe a phylisosphere 837  
 Ascauns that craft is so lyght to lere  
 Nay nay god wot al be he monk or frere  
 Prest or chanoun or ony othir whit  
 Thow he sete at his bok day or nygh[t] 841  
 In lernynge of this eluysch nyce loore  
 Al is in veyn & parde meche moore  
 To lerne a lewede man this sotylete  
 ffy spek nat therof for it wele nat be 845  
 And kunne he lettereure or kunne he non  
 As in effect he schal fynde it al oon  
 For bothe to be myn saluacioun  
 Concludyn as in multiplicacyoun 849  
 I-lyche weel / whan they han al I-do  
 This is to seyn they fayle bothe twe  
 // 3it forgat I to make rehersayle  
 Of wateris coresif & of lemayle 853  
 And of bodyis mollyficioun  
 And also of here induracioun

Oyles absolucioun / & metal fusible  
 To tellyn al wolde passyn any bible 857  
 That ower is / wherefore as for the beste  
 Of alle <sup>1</sup> these namys now wele I me reste [<sup>1</sup> word scratcht out]  
 ffor as I trowe I haue ȝow told I-nogh  
 To reyse a fend al loke he neuere so rogh 861  
 // A nay lat be the philisopheris stoon  
 Elixer clepid / we sekyn faste echon  
 ffor hadde we hym we were sekyr I-nogh  
 But on to god of heuene I make a wow 865  
 ffor al oure craft whan we han al I-do  
 And al oure sleyghte he wele nat come vs to  
 He hath I-mad vs spende mechil good  
 ffor sorwe of whiche almost <sup>1</sup> we wexe wood 869  
 But that good hope crepith in oure herte  
 Supposynge euere thow we sore smerte  
 To be releuyd by hym afterward / [leaf 385, back,  
 Swich supposynge & hope is scharp & hard 873  
 I warne ȝow wel it is to sekyn euere  
 That future temps that made men to disseuere  
 In trust therof from al that euere they hadde  
 ȝit of that art they can not wexe sadde 877  
 ffor vn-to hem it is a bittyr swete  
 So semyth it for ne hadde they but a schete  
 Whiche that they myghte wrappe hem in a nyght  
 And a bakke for to walke in be day light 881  
 They wolde hem selue / & spendyn on this craft  
 They can not stynte til no thyng be laft  
 And euere more where that euere they goon  
 Men may hem knowe by smel of bronston 885  
 ffor al the world they stynkyn as a got  
 Here sauour is so rammysch & so hot  
 That thow a man<sup>2</sup> from hem a myle bee [<sup>2</sup> some letters  
 scratcht out]  
 The sauour wele enfecte hem trustyth me 889  
 Lo thus be smellynge & thredbare aray  
 ȝif that men lyste these folk knowe may

And ȝif a man wele aske hem pryuyly  
 Whi that they been clothid so vn-thriftly 893  
 They righ a-non wele rounne in his ere  
 And seyn ȝif that they espied were  
 Men woldyn hem sle by cause of here science  
 Lo thus these folk betrayen innocence 897  
 Passe ouer this I go myn tale vnto  
 Er than the pot be on the fyre I-do  
 Of metallis *with* a certeyn quantite  
 Myn lord hem tempereth & no man but he 901  
 Now he is goon I dar say boldely  
 ffor as men saye he can do craftly  
 Algate I wot wel he hath swich a name  
 And ȝit ful ofte he rennyth in a blame 905  
 // And wete ȝe how ful ofty<sup>n</sup> it happith soo  
 The pot to-brekith & farwel al is go  
 These metallis been of so greet violence  
 Oure wallis mowe not make hem resistance 909  
 But ȝif they were wrought of lym / & ston [leaf 386]  
 They perce so & thour the wal they gon  
 And some of hem synke in-to the ground  
 Thus haue we lost be tymys manye a pound 913  
 And some are skaterede in the flor a-boute  
 Some lepe in-to the rof / *with*-outyn doute  
 Thow that the fend nat in the sight hym schewe  
 I trowe he with vs be that ilke schrewe 917  
 In helle where as he is lord & syre  
 Ne is there more wo ne more rancour ne yre  
 Whan that oure pot as I haue sayd /  
 Euery man chit / & halt hym euelle a-payd 921  
 //Some seyn it was a-long on the fyr makyng  
 Some seydyn nay / it was on the blowyng  
 Thanne was I aferid / for that was myn offis  
 Straw quod the thredde / ȝe been lewede & nys 925  
 It was nat tempered as it aughte to be  
 Nay quod the forte stynt & lestene to me



By cause oure fyr was not mad of bech  
 That is the cause & othir noon so theech 929  
 I can not telle wheron it was long  
 But wel I wot greet stryf is vs a-mong  
 // What quod myn lord there is no more to done  
 Of these *perilis* I wele be war eft sone 933  
 I am rygh sekyr that the pot was crased  
 Be as be may be 3e no thyng a-mased  
 As vsage is lat swepe the flor aswythe  
 Pluk vp 3oure hertys & beth glad & blythe 937  
 The mullok on an hep I-swepid was  
 And on the flor I-caste a canevas  
 And al the mullok in a seue I-throwe  
 And syftid & I-pikid manye a throwe 941  
 // Parde quod on / sumwhat of oure metal  
 3it is ther heere they that we haue nat al  
 And thow this thyng mys happe as now  
 A-nothir tyme it may be weel I-now 945  
 Vs muste putte oure good in auenture  
 A marchaunt *parde* may not al-wey endure  
 Trustyth me wel in his prosperite [leaf 386, back]  
 Sumtyme his good is drowned in the se 949  
 And sumtyme comyth it saf vn-to the londe  
 Pes quod myn lord the nexte tyme wele I fonde  
 To brynge oure craft al in a-nothir plit  
 And but I do sere lat me han the wit 953  
 There was defaute in sumwhat wel I wot  
 A-nothir seyde the fuyr was ouyr hot  
 But be it hot or cold I dare seye this  
 That we concludyn euere more amys 957  
 We fayle of that whiche that we woldyn haue  
 And in oure madnesse eueremore we raue  
 And whan we been to-gederis euerichon  
 Euery man semyth a salamon 961  
 But alle thyng whiche that schynyth as the gold Non teneas  
 Nis nat gold / as I haue herd told aurum &c.

Ne eueri appil that is fayr at eye

- Ne is nat good / what so men clappe or crye 965

Righ so lo faryth it a-mongis vs

He that semyth the wiseste be Iesus

Is most fol whan it comyth to the pref

And he that semyth treweste is a thef 969

That schal 3e knowe er that I from 3ow wende

By that I of myn tale haue mad an ende

[*No break in the MS.*]

## [THE TALE.]

// There is a chanoun of religioun  
 A-mongis vs wolde enfecte al a toun 973  
 They it as gret were as was nynyue  
 Rome Alysauindir Troye / & othere thre  
 Hise sleyghtis & his infinit falsenesse  
 There coude no man write as I gesse 977  
 Thow that he myghte leue a thousand 3eer  
 In al this world of falshed nys his per  
 ffor in hise termys he so wel hym wyndis  
 And spekyn hise wordis in so slye kyndis 981  
 Whan he comune schal with ony wight  
 That he wele make hym dote a-non ryght  
 But it a fend be as hym seluyn is  
 ful manye a man hath he begyled er this 985  
 And wele 3if that he leue may a while [l. af 387]  
 And 3it men ride & goon ful manye a myle  
 Hym for to seke & haue his acqueyntaunce  
 Not knowynge of his false gouernaunce 989  
 And 3if 3ow liste to 3eue me audyence  
 I wole it telle / here in 3oure presence  
 But worschepful Chanony[s] relygious  
 Ne demyth nat that I slau[n]dere 3oure hous 993  
 Al thow myn tale of a chanoun be  
 Of euery ordere sum schrewe is pardee  
 That god forbede that al a cumpayny  
 Schulde rewe a synguler manys foly 997  
 To slaundere 3ow is nothyng myn entent  
 But to correcte that is mys I-ment

This tale was nat only told for 3ow  
 But for othere mo 3e wete wel how 1001  
 That a-mongis cristis apostellis twelwe  
 There was no traytour but Iudas hym selue  
 Thanne why schulde the remenaunt han blame  
 That gilteles were / be 3ow seye I the same 1005  
 Saue only this 3if 3e wele herkene me  
 If ony Iudas in 3oure couent be  
 Remeuyth hym be tymys I 3ow rede  
 If schame or los may causen ony drede 1009  
 And beth nothyng displesid I 3ow preye  
 But in this cas herkenyth what I schal seye  
 // In lundene was a prest an annueler  
 That therin dwellede hadde manye a 3er 1013  
 Whiche was so plesaunt & so seruysable  
 Vn-to the wif where as sche was at table  
 That sche wolde suffere hym no thyng for to paye  
 ffor bord ne clothing wente he neuere so gaye 1017  
 And spendynge siluyr hade he righ I-now  
 Therof no fors I wele procede as now  
 And telle forth myn tale of the Chanoun  
 That brougte this prest to confusioun 1021  
 // This false Chanoun cam vp on a day  
 Vn-to this prestis chaumbere where he lay  
 Be-sekyng him to lenyn hym a certeyn [leaf 387, back] 1025  
 Of gold & he wolde quite it hym ageeyn  
 Lene me a mark quod he but dayis thre  
 And at myn day I wele it quytn the  
 And If so be that thow me fynde fals  
 A-nothir day do hange me by the hals 1029  
 // This man<sup>1</sup> hym tok a mark & that aswythe [<sup>1</sup> first monk] 1031  
 And this chanoun hym thankede ofte sythe  
 And tok his leue & wente forth his weye  
 And at the thredde day brougte his monye 1033  
 And to the prest tok his gold a-geyn  
 Wherof this prest was wondir glad & fayn

Certis quod he no thyng a-noyeth me  
 To lene a man a nobele or to or thre 1037  
 Or what thyng were in myn possessioun  
 Whan he so trewe is of condicioun  
 That in nowise he breke wele his day  
 To swich a man I can neuere seyn nay 1041  
 // What quod this chanoun schulde I be ontrewē  
 Nay that were a thyng I-falle were al of newe  
 Trouthe is a thyng that I wele euere kepe  
 Vn-to that day In whiche that I schal crepe 1045  
 [In to my graue or elles god for-bede [Sloane MS 1685, leaf 172]  
 Beleueth þis as sykere as ys youre crede]  
 God thanke I & in good tyme be it seyð  
 That there was neuere man ȝit euele apayed 1049  
 ffor gold ne siluyr that he to me sente  
 Ne neuere falshed in myn herte I mente  
 And sere quod he now of myn pryuyte  
 Syn ȝe godly han ben on to me 1053  
 And kythed to me so gret gentillesse  
 Sumwhat to kythe with ȝoure kyndenesse  
 I wele ȝow schewe & ȝif ȝow lystē to lere  
 I-wele ȝow teche pleylnly the manere 1057  
 How I can werke in philosophie  
 Takith good hed ȝe schul wel sen at Iȝe  
 That I wele don a maystrie er I go  
 // ȝe quod the prest / ȝe sere & wele ȝe so 1061  
 Marie therof I preye ȝow hertely  
 At ȝoure comaundement trewely  
 Qu[o]d the chanoun & ellis god for-beede [leaf 388]  
 Lo how this thef coude his seruyse bede 1065  
 fful soth it is that swich profered seruyse  
 Stynkyth as wytnesseth these olde wise  
 And that ful sone I wele it veryfye  
 In this chanoun rote of alle trecherye 1069  
 That euere more delit hath & gladnesse  
 Sweche fendely thougtis in his herte inpresse



How cristis peple he may to myschef brynge  
 God kepe vs from his false dissymulynge 1073  
 // Not wiste this prest *with hom* that he delte  
 Ne of his harm comynge he no thyng felte  
 O sely prest o sely innocent  
 With coueytise a-non thow schat ben blent 1077  
 O graceles ful blynde is thyn conceyte<sup>1</sup> [1 *Arst concencte*]  
 No thyng art thow war of the disseyte  
 Whiche that this fox I-schapyn hat to thee  
 Hise wyly wrenchis / thow ne mayst not fle 1081  
 Wherefore to the conclusioun  
 That referith to thyn confusoun  
 Vnhappi man a-non I wele me hie  
 To tellyn thyn vnwit & heigh folye 1085  
 And ek the falsenesse of that othir wreche  
 As fer forth as that myn conyng wele streche  
 // This Chanoun was myn lord 3e wolden wene  
 Sire hust in feyth & by the heuenys queene 1089  
 It was a nothir Chanoun & not he  
 That can an hunderede fold more subtylete  
 He hath betrayed folkis sundery tyme  
 Of his falsenesse it dullyth me to ryme 1093  
 Euere whan that I speke / of his falshede  
 ffor schame of hym mynne chekis waxen reede  
 Algatis they begynne for to glowe  
 ffor rednesse haue I non righ wel I knowe 1097  
 In myn visage for fumys dyuerse  
 Of metallis whiche as 3e han herd me reherse  
 Consumyd & wastid han myn rednesse  
 Now tak hed of this Chanounnys curssedenesse 1101  
 Sere quod he to the prest let 3oure man gon [leaf 388, back]  
 ffor quik siluyr that we hadde it a-non  
 And lat hym bryngyn ouuncis two or thre  
 And whan he comyth as faste schul 3e se 1105  
 A wondyr thyng whiche 3e say neuere er this  
 // Sere quod the prest it schal ben don I-wis

He bad his seruaunt / fechyn hym this thyng  
 And he al redy was at his bedyng 1109  
 And wente hym forth & cam a-non a-geyn  
 With this quik syluyr sot[h]ly for to seyn  
 And tok these ouncis thre to the Chanoun  
 And hem <sup>1</sup>leyde fayre & weel a doun [11<sup>1</sup> first h] 1113  
 And bad the seruaunt colis for to brynge  
 That he a-non myght go to hese werkyng  
 The colis right a-non weren I-fet  
 And this Chanoun tok out a croslet 1117  
 Of his bosum & schewed it the prest  
 This instrument wheche that thow sest  
 Take in thyn hand / & put thyn self ther-inne 1120  
 Of this quiksiluir [an vnce and here be-gynne] [Sloane 1685, U 173:  
 In name of cryst to wexe a philysophere *half the line scratch  
 out in Camb. MS.*  
 There ben but fewe to whiche that I wolde profere  
 To schewyn hem thus meche of myn science  
 ffor 3e schul sen here be experience 1125  
 That this quik siluyr I wele mortifye  
 Rygh in 3oure sighte a-non with-outyn lye  
 And make it as good siluer & as fyn  
 As there is ony in 3oure pors or myn 1129  
 Or ellis where & make it malliable  
 And ellis heldith me fals & vn-stable  
 Amongis folk for euere to appere  
 // I haue a poudere here that coste me ful dere 1133  
 Schal make al good for it is cause of al  
 Myn kunnyng whiche that I 3ow schewe schal  
 Voydith 3oure man & lat hym be ther oute  
 And schet the dore whil we ben a-boute 1137  
 Oure pryuyte that no man vs espye  
 Whilis that we werke in this philosephie  
 Al as he bad fulfyld was in dede [leaf 389]  
 This ilke seruaun[t] a-non ryght out 3eede 1141  
 And his maystyr schette the dore a-non  
 And to here labour spedyly they gon

This prest at this chanonys biddy[n]g  
 Vp-on the fer a-non sette this thyng 1145  
 And blew the fuyr & besiede hym ful faste  
 And this chanoun in-to the croslet caste  
 A poudere not I wherof that it was  
 I-mad othir of chalk othir of glas 1149  
 Or sumwhat eft / was nat worth a flye  
 To blynde with this prest & bad hym hye  
 The colis for to couche al a-boue  
 The croslet for in tokenynge I the loue 1153  
 Quod the chanoun thynne owene handis two  
 Schul werche alle thynges whiche that schal here be do  
 Graunt mercy quod the prest & was ful glad  
 And couchede cole as that the chanoun bad 1157  
 And whil he besi was this fendeli wreche  
 This false chanoun the foule fend hym feche  
 Out of his bosum tok a bechene cole  
 In which ful subtilly was mad an hole 1161  
 And there in was put of siluyr lymayle  
 An ounce & stoppid was with-outyn fayle  
 This hole with wex to putte the lymayl in  
 And vndyr-stondith that this false gyn 1165  
 Was not mad there but it was mad byfore  
 And othere thyngis that I schal telle more  
 Here aftyrward which that he with hym broughte  
 Er he cam ther hym to begile he thoughte 1169  
 And so he dede er than they wente a twynne  
 Til he hadde ternede hym coude he not blyne  
 It dullede me whan I of hym speke  
 On his falsehed fayn wolde I be wreke 1173  
 3if I wiste how but he is her & ther  
 He is so varyaunt he abit nower  
 But takyth hed seris now for godis lowe  
 He tok his cole of which I spak a-boue 1177  
 And in his hand he bar it pryuyly  
 And whilis the prest couchede besili<sup>1</sup>

[leaf 389, back]

[<sup>1</sup> First pryuyly]

The colis as I tolde 3ow er this  
 This chanoun seyde frend 3e don a-mys 1181  
 This is nat couched as it oughte be  
 But sone I schal amendyn it quod he  
 Now lat me medle therewith but a while  
 ffor of 3ow haue I pete be seynt gyle 1185  
 3e been rygh hot I se wel how 3e swete  
 Haue here a cloth & wipe away the weete  
 And whilis that the prest wipede his face  
 This chanoun tok his cole with sory grace 1189  
 And leyde a-boue vp on the mydward  
 Of the croslet & blew wel aftyrward  
 Til that the colys begynne faste brenne  
 Now 3eue vs drynke quod the Chanoun thanne 1193  
 As swythe al schal be wel I vndirtake  
 Sitte we doun & lat vs merye make  
 And whan that this chanonys bechene cole  
 Was brent al the lemayle out of the hole 1197  
 In-to the croslet fyl a-non a-doun  
 And so it muste nedis be resoun  
 Syn it so euene a-boue couchede was  
 But therof <sup>ne</sup> wyste the prest allas 1201  
 He demede alle the colis lyche goode  
 ffor of the sleyghte he nothyng vndyrstode  
 And whan this alcamystre saw his tyme  
 Rise vp quod he sere prest & stand by me 1205  
 And for I wot weel Ingot haue 3e non  
 Goth walkyth forth & bryngeth a chalk ston  
 ffor I wele make it of the same schap  
 That is an Ingot / 3if I may han hap 1209  
 And brynge ek with 3ow a bolle or a panne  
 fful of watyr & 3e schul wel se thanne  
 How that oure besynesse schal thryue & preue  
 And 3it for 3e schal han non mys-beleue 1213  
 Ne wrong conceite of me in 3oure absence  
 I wele not ben out of 3oure presence

But gon *with* 3ow & come *with* 3ow a-geyn [leaf 390]  
 The chambere dore shortly for to seyn 1217  
 They openede & schette & wente here weye  
 And forth *with* hem they caryedyn the keye  
 And come ageyn *with*-outyn ony delay  
 What schulde I taryen al the longe day 1221  
 He tok the chalk & schop it in the wise  
 Of an Ingot as I schal 3ow deuyse  
 I seye he tok out of his owene sleue  
 A teyne of syluyr euele mote he cheue 1225  
 Whiche that ne was but an ounce of weighte  
 And taketh hed now of his owene sleighte  
 He schop his Ingot in lenthe & in breede  
 Of this teigne *with*-outyn ony drede 1229  
 So slyly that the prest it nat espide  
 And in his sleue a-non he gan it hide  
 And from the fuyr he tok vp his mater  
 And in the Ingot put it *with* merye cheer 1233  
 And in the watyr vessel he it caste  
 Whan that hym leste & bad the prest as faste  
 Loke what there is put in thyn hand & grope  
 Thow fynde schalt there syluyr as I hope 1237  
 What deuyl of helle schulde it ellis be  
 Schauynge of syluyr syluyr is parde  
 // He put his hand in & tok vp a teyne  
 Of silluyr fyn & glad in euery veyne 1241  
 Was this prest whan he seygh[h] that it was so  
 Goddis blyssynge & hise moderis also  
 And alle halwis haue the sere chanoun  
 Seyde the prest & I here malysoun 1245  
 But & 3e vouchen saf to techyn it me  
 This nobelle craft & this sotylete  
 I wele been 3oure in al that euere I may  
 // Quod the chanoun 3it wele I make asay 1249  
 The secunde tyme that 3e may takyn hede  
 And been expert of this / & in 3oure nede



A-nothir day assay in myn absence  
 This disciplyne & this crafty science 1253  
 Let take a-nothir vnce quod he tho [leaf 590, back]  
 Of quyk siluyr with-outyn wordis mo  
 An[d] do therwith as 3e han don er this  
 Whith that othyr which that now syluyr is 1257  
 // The prest hym besyed in al that euere he can  
 To doon as this Chanoun this cursede man  
 Comaundede hym & faste blew the fyr  
 ffor to come theeffect of his desyr 1261  
 And this chanoun rygh in the meene while  
 Al redy was this prest eft to begyle  
 And for a cuntenaunce in his hand he bar  
 An holmene stikke / taak keepe & be war 1265  
 In the ende of which an ounce & nomore<sup>1</sup> [1 *first manere*]  
 Of silvir lemail put was as byfore  
 Was in his cole / & stoppid with wex weel  
 ffor to kepe in his lymayl euerydel 1269  
 And whil the prest was in his besynesse  
 This chanoun with his stikke gan hym dresse  
 To hym a-non & his poudere caste in  
 As he dede er <sup>2</sup>the deuyl out of his skyn [2 *t first d*] 1273  
 Hym turne I preye to god for his falsehede  
 ffor he was euere fals in thought & dede  
 And with this stikke a-boue the Croslet  
 That was ordeynyd with that false Iet 1277  
 He styre<sup>3</sup> the colis til relente gan [3 *ty altered*]  
 The wex a-3en the fer as euery man  
 But it a fol be wot wel it mot neede  
 And al that in the stikke was out 3ede 1281  
 And in the croslet hastyliche it fel  
 // Now goode sere what wele 3e bet than weel  
 Whan that this prest was begiled ageyn  
 Supposynge nought but trouthe sothe to seyn 1285  
 He was so glad that I can not expresse  
 In no manere his trouthe & his gladnesse

And to the Chanoun he proferede eft sone  
 Body & good 3e quod the Chanoun sone 1289  
 Thow pore I <sup>1</sup>be crafty thow schat me fynde [<sup>1</sup> b altered]  
 I warne the 3it is there more be-hynde..  
 Is there <sup>2</sup>ony copyr / herinne seyde he<sup>2</sup> [leaf 391] [<sup>2-3</sup> in the cor-  
 rector's hand]  
 3a quod the prest / sere I trowe wel there be 1293  
 Ellis go beye vs sum & that aswythe  
 Now goode sere go thyn wey an hithe  
 He wente his wey & with this copar cam  
 And this chanoun it in his handis nam 1297  
 And of that copar weyed vp but an ounce  
 Al to symple is myn tunge to pronounce  
 As mynystre of myn wit the doubilnesse  
 Of this Chanoun rote of alle cursedenesse 1301  
 He semede frendely to hem that knewyn hym not  
 But he was feenly bothe in werk & thou3t  
 It deryeth me to telle of his falsenesse  
 And neuer the les 3it wele I it expresse 1305  
 To the entent that men may be war therby  
 And for non othir cause trewely  
 // He putte his Ounce of copir in the croslet  
 And on the fer aswythe he hath it set 1309  
 And cast in poudyr & made the prest to blowe  
 And in his werkyng for to stoupe lowe  
 As he dede er & al was but a Iape  
 Rygh as hym lyste the prest he made 1313  
 And afterward in the Ingot it caste  
 And in the panne put it as the laste  
 Of watyr / & in he putte his owene hand  
 And in his sleue as 3e be-forynhand 1317  
 Herde me telle he hadde a syluyr teyne  
 He slyly tok it out this cursede heyne  
 Vnwetynge this prest of this false craft  
 And in the pannys boteme he hath it laft 1321  
 And in the watyr rounbelynge to & fro  
 And wondyr pruyly tok vp also

The copyr teyne nought knowynge this prest  
 And hedde it & hym hente by the brest 1325  
 And to hym spak & thus seyde in his game  
<sup>1</sup>sToupith a-doun by god 3e be to blame [1 s later]  
 Helpith me now as I dede 3ow whil er  
 Put in 3oure Hand & lokyth what is ther 1329  
 This prest tok vp the syluyr teyn a-non [leaf 391, back]  
 Thanne seyde the chanoun lat hym gon  
 With these thre teynys <sup>2</sup>which thatwe han wrought<sup>2</sup> [<sup>2</sup>—<sup>3</sup> corr.]  
 To sum gold smyth & loke 3if they been ou3t 1333  
 ffor be myn feyth I nolde for myn hood  
 But 3if there were siluyr fyn & good  
 And that aswithe preuyd schal <sup>2</sup>it be<sup>2</sup> //  
 // Vn-to the goldsmyth with these teynys thre 1337  
 They wente & putte these teynys in asay  
 To fier & hamyr ne myghte no man sey nay  
 But that they were as hem oghte bee  
 // This sottede prest ho was gladdere than he 1341  
 Was neuere brid gladdere a-3en the day  
 Ne nyghtyngale in the sesoun of may  
 Was neuere non that leste bet to synge  
 Ne lady lustiere in carolyng 1345  
 Or for to speke of loue & womanhede  
 Ne knyght in armys to don an hardy dede  
 To standyn in grace of his lady dere  
 Than hadde this prest this sory craft to lere 1349  
 And to the Chanoun thus he spak & seide  
 ffor loue of god that for vs alle deyede  
 And as I may deserue it vn-to 3ow  
 What schal this resceyt coste tellith me now 1353  
 // By oure lord quod this Chanoun it is dere  
 I warne 3ow wel / for saue I & a frere  
 In <sup>3</sup>Ingelond there can no man it make [<sup>3</sup> I first i]  
 No fors quod he now sere for godys sake 1357  
 What schal I paye tellith me I preye  
 I-wis quod he it is wol deere I seye

Sire at on word 3if that 3ow leste it haue  
 3e schul paye fourty pound so god me saue 1361  
 And nere the frenchepe that 3e dede er this  
 To me 3e schuldyn paye more I-wis  
 This prest the summe of fourty pound anon  
 Of noblis fette & tok hem euerichon 1365  
 To this Chanun for this ilke resseit  
 Al his werkyng was but fraude & disseid  
 Sire prest quod he / I kepe to han no loos [leaf 392]  
 Of myn craft for I wolde it kept weere clos 1369  
 And as 3e loue me kepith it secre  
 ffor and men knewyn al myn subtilete  
 By god they woldyn haue so gret enuye  
 To me by cause of myn philosophie 1373  
 I schulde been deed there were non othir weye  
 God it for-bede quod the prest what sey3e  
 3it hadde I leuere to spendyn al myn good  
 Whiche that I haue & ellis wexe I wood 1377  
 Than that 3e schuldyn fallyn in swich myschef  
 ffor 3oure goode wil sere haue 3e rygh good pref  
 Quod the chanoun & farewel graunt mercy  
 He wente his wey & neuere the prest hym sey 1381  
 Aftyr that day & whan the prest schulde  
 Makyn assay at swych tyme as he wolde  
 Of this resseit farewel it wolde not be  
 Lo thus be-lapid & begiled was he 1385  
 Thus made he his introductioun  
 To brynge folk to distruccioun  
 // Considerith seris / how that in eche estat  
 By-twixe men & gold there is debat 1389  
 So fer forth that onethis is there non  
 This multiplinge thus blent manyon  
 That in good fey I trowe that it be  
 The cause grettest of swich skarsete 1393  
 Philisopheris spekyn so mystily  
 In this craft that men may not come therby

ffor ony wit that men han now on dayis  
 They mowe weel cheteryn as don Iayis 1397  
 And in here termys sette here lust & peyne  
 But to here purpos schul they neuere atteyne  
 A man may lightly lerne 3if he haue ought  
 To multiplye & turne his good to noght 1401  
 Lo swich a lukere is in this lusty game  
 A manys murthe it wolde turne in-to grame  
 And emptyn grete & heuy pursis  
 And makyn folk for to purchase cursis 1405  
 Of hem that han here good there-to I-lent [leaf 392, back]  
 O fy for schame they that han been brent  
 Allas can they nat flen the feris hete  
 3e that it vse I rede 3e it lete 1409  
 Lest 3e lese al / for bet than neuere is late  
 Neuere to thryue were to longe a date  
 Thow 3e prolle ay 3e schul it neuere fynde  
 3e been as bold as is bayard the blynde 1413  
 That blunderith forth & peril castyth non  
 He is as bold to renne ageyn a ston  
 As for to gon besydis in the weye  
 So fare 3e that multiplye I seye 1417  
 3[i]f that 3oure eye can not seen a ryght  
 Loke that 3oure mynde lakke not 3oure sight  
 ffor thow 3e loke neuere so broode & stare  
 3e schul no thyng wyne on that chaffare 1421  
 But waste al that 3e may rape & renne  
 With-drawe the fuyr lest it to faste brenne  
 Medelyth no more with that art I meene  
 ffor 3if 3e don 3oure thrift is goon ful cleene 1425  
 And rygh aswithe I wele 3ow tellyn heere  
 What that 3e philisopheris seyn in this mateere  
 // Lo thus seyth arnold of the newe touz  
 As his rosarie makyth mencyoun 1429  
 He seyth rzt thus with-outyn ony lye  
 There may no man Mercurye mortifye



But ȝif it be with his brotheris knowelechyng  
 How that he / which that fyrst seyde this thing 1433  
 Of philosophieris fadir was / hermes  
 He sey how that he dragoun douteles  
 Ne deyeth nat but ȝif that he be slayn  
 With his brothir & that is for to sayn 1437  
 By dragoun mercurye & non othir  
 He vndyr-stod & brymston by his brothyr  
 That out of sel & luna weere I-drawe  
 And therefore tak heed / seyde he to myn sawe 1441  
 Lat no man besye this art for to seche  
 But ȝif that he thentencioun & speche  
 Of philosophieris vndyrstonde can [leaf 393]  
 An[d] ȝif he do he is a lowede man 1445  
 ffor this science & this cunnyng quod he  
 Is of the secre of the secretis parde  
 // Also there was a disciple of plato  
 That on a tyme he seyde his maystir to 1449  
 As his bok Senyor wele bere witnesse  
 And this was his demaunde in sothfastnesse  
 Teelle me the name of the pryue stoon  
 And plato answerde vn-to hym a-noon 1453  
 Take the ston that Titanos men name  
 Whiche is that quod he Magnasia is the same  
 Seyde plato ȝa syre & is it thus  
 This is ignotum per ignocius 1457  
 What is magnacia goode sere I ȝow preye  
 // It is a watyr that is mad I seye  
 Of elementis foure quod Plato  
 Telle me the rooche goode sire quod he tho 1461  
 Of that watyr ȝif that it be ȝoure wil  
 Nay nay quod plato serteyn that I nyl  
 // The philisopheris sworn were cuerichon  
 That they schulde discouere it on to non 1465  
 Nor in the bok it write in no manere  
 ffor on to cryst it is so lef & deere

That he wele not that it discouered be  
 But wheere it likyth to his deitee 1469  
 Men for to enspire & ek for to defende  
 Whom that hym likith lo this is the ende  
 Thanne conclude<sup>1</sup> I thus syn that god of heuene [<sup>1</sup> lu *first* hi]  
 Ne wele not that the philisopheris neuene 1473  
 How that a man schal come vn-to this stoon  
 I rede as for the beste lat it gon  
 ffor ho so makyth good his aduersarye  
 As for to werkyn ony thyng In contrarye 1477  
 Of his wil sertis neuere schal he thryue  
 Thow that he multyplic terme of lyue  
 And there a poynt for endit is myn tale  
 God sende euery trewe man bote of his bale 1481

Here is endit the chanounnys manys tale [leaf 393, back]

[*Slight break in the MS.*]

## GROUP H. FRAGMENT IX.

### § 1. THE MANCIPLE'S HEAD-LINK.

#### CAMBRIDGE MS.

Heryth the merye wordys of the Host to the cok of  
Lundene.

[on leaf 393, back]

[Gap of two lines in the MS.]

**W**Ote ȝe not where there stant a lityl toun  
 Which<sup>1</sup> that I-clepid is Bobbe vp & doun  
 Vndyr the ble in Cauntyrbury weye  
 Theere gan oure ost for to Iape & pleye 4  
 And seyde seris what doun is in the myre  
 Is there no man for preyere ne for hire  
 That wole a-wake oure felawe here be-hynde  
 A thef myghte ful lightly hym robbe & bynde 8  
 Se how he nappith so how for<sup>1</sup> Cokkis bonys [<sup>1</sup> word scratcht out]  
 That he wele falle from his hors at onys  
 Is that a cok of lundene with myschaunce  
 Do hym come forth he knowith his penaunce 12  
 ffor he schal telle a tale be myn fey  
 Al thow it be not worth a botel hey<sup>2</sup> [<sup>2</sup> otel hey, later?]  
 A-wake thow cok quod he god ȝeue the sorwe  
 What eylith the to slepe by the morwe 16  
 Hast thow had fien al nyght or art thow dronke  
 Or hast thow with sum quene al nyght I-swonkyn  
 So that thow mayst nat holdyn vp thyn hed  
 This cok that was ful pale & no thing red 20  
 Seyde to oure hoost so god me blysse  
 As there is fallyn on me swich heuynesse  
 Not I not why that me were leuere slepe  
 Than the beste galoun wyn in chepe 24

// Wel quod the Maunciple ȝif it may doon ese 25  
 To the sere Cook & to no whight displese  
 Whiche that here rydyth in this cumpayne  
 And that oure host wele of his curteysye 28  
 I wele as now excuse the of thyn tale  
 ffor in good fey thyn visage is ful pale  
 Thynne eyne daswe ek as that me thynkith  
 And weel I wot thyn breth ful soure stynkith 32  
 That schewith weel thow art nat weel disposed [leaf 394]  
 Of me certeyn thow schalt nat been I-glosed  
 Se how he ganyth lo this dronkene wight  
 As thow he wolde swelwe vs a-noon right 36  
 Hold clos thyn mouth man by thyn fadyr kyn  
 The deuyll of helle set his foot ther in  
 Thyn cusede breth wele enfecte vs alle  
 ffy stynkyng swyn fy foule mote the be-falle 40  
 A takyth hede seris of this lusty man  
 Now swete seris wole ȝe Iuste at the fan  
 There-to me thynkyth ȝe been weel I-schape  
 I trowe that ȝe dronkyn han wyn ape 44  
 And that is whan men pleyen with a straw  
 And with his speche the Cook wex wroth & wraw  
 And on the Manciple he gan nodde faste  
 ffor lak of speche & doun the hors hym caste 48  
 Where as he lay tyl that the hym vp tok  
 This was a fayr chiuache of a cook  
 Allas ne hadde holde hym bi his ladil  
 And er that he ageyn were in his sadil 52  
 There was greet schowyng / bothe two & fro  
 To lyfte hym vp & meche care & wo  
 So vnwery was this sorye pallede gost  
 And to the maunciple thanne spak oure hoost 56  
 By-cause drynk hat *dominacioun*  
 Vp-on this man by myn *saluacioun*  
 I trowe lewedely he wolde telle his tale  
 ffor were it wyn or old / or moysti ale 60

That he hath dronkyn he spekyth in his nose 61  
 And sneseth faste & ek he hath the pose  
 He hath also to *don* moore than I-nogh  
 To kepe hym & his capil out of the slow 64  
 And If he falle from his capil eft sone  
 Thanne schal we alle han I-nogh to done  
 To lifyn vp his heuy dronkene cors  
 Telle on thyn tale of hym make I no fors 68  
 // But 3it Manciple In feyth thow art to nyce  
 Thus opynly repreue hym of his vyce  
 Anothir day he wele *paraurenture* [leaf 304, back]  
 Reclayme the & brynge the to loure 72  
 I mene he speke wele of smale thyngis  
 As for to pynche at thynne rekenyngis  
 That were nat onest 3if that it come to pref  
 // No quod the Manciple that were a greet myschef 76  
 So myght he lyghtely brynge me in the snare  
 3it hadde I leuere payen for the mare  
 Whiche he rit on than he schulde with me st'yue  
 I wele nat wrathe hym also mote I thyroe 80  
 That that I spak I seyde but in borde  
 And wete 3e weel I haue heere in a gorde  
 A draght of wyn 3a of a ripe grape  
 And right a-noon 3e schul seen a good Iape 84  
 This cok schal drenke therof If I may  
 Vp payne of deth he wele nat sey me nay  
 And certeynly to tellyn as it was  
 Of this vessel this Cook drank faste allas 88  
 What nedith hym he drank I-now by-forn  
 And whan he hadde poupid in this horn  
 To the manciple he tok the gorde a-geyn  
 And of that drenk the Cook was wondyr fayn 92  
 And thankede hym in swich wyse as he coude  
 Thanne gan cure hoost to laghe wondyr loude  
 And seyde I se weel it is necessarie  
 Wheree that we goon / we good drynk <sup>1</sup>with vs carie <sup>1</sup> 96



ffor that wele turne rancour & disese .	97
To a-cord & loue & manye a wrong appese .	
O Bacus I-blyssede 'be thyn name . <sup>1</sup>	[ <sup>1</sup> — <sup>1</sup> corrected]
That so canst turne earnest in-to game .	100
Worchipe & thank be to thyn deite .	
Of that matiere 3e gete namore of me .	
Telle on thyn tale manciple I the preye .	
Weel sere quod he herkenyth what I schal seye .	104

[*The remainder of the page is blank.*]

## Here begyneth the Manciple hys tale [leaf 395]

*[Painting of the Manciple on horseback.]*

**W**Han phebus dwellede heere in this erthe adoun  
 As olde bokys makyn mencion  
 He was the moste lusti bacheleere  
 In al this world & ek the beste archere 108  
 He slow Phitoun the serpent as he lay  
 Slepynge a-geyn the sunne vp-on a day  
 And manye a nothir<sup>1</sup> noble worthi dede  
 He with his bowe <sup>2</sup>wroughte as 3e may rede<sup>3</sup>

Pleeen he coude on euery menstrelsyne [<sup>1</sup> t altered]  
[<sup>2</sup> w first b]  
[<sup>3</sup> rede first bere]  
 And syngyn that it was a melodye

To heryn of his cleere voys the soun  
 Sertis the kyng of thebes Amphioun 116

That with his syngyn wallede that cete  
 Koude neuere syngyn half so wel as he  
 Therto he was the semylyeste man  
 That is or was sithe that the world be-gan 120

What nedith it hise feturis to discryue  
 ffor in this world was non so fayr on lyue  
 He was therwith fulfylde of gentyllesse  
 Of honour & of parfyt worthynesse. 124

// This phebus that was flour of bachillieri<sup>c</sup> [leaf 395, back]

As wel in fredom as in chyualrye  
 ffor his disport in signe ek of victorie  
 Of phitoun so as tellyth vs the storrye 128

Was wont to beryn in his hand a bowe  
 // Now hadde this phebus in his <sup>4</sup>hous a <sup>5</sup>Crowe [<sup>1</sup> o, <sup>5</sup> C altered]  
 Whiche in a cage he fosterede manye a day  
 And taughte it speke as men teche a Iay 132

Whit was this crowe as is a snow whit swan 133  
 And countyrfetid the speche of euery man  
 He coude whan he schulde telle a tale  
 Therwith in al this world non nyghtynghale 136  
 Ne coude by an hunderede thousent deel  
 Syngyn so wondir meryely & weel  
 // Now hadde this phebus in his hous a wyf  
 Whiche that he louede moore than his lyf 140  
 And nyght & day dede euere his diligence  
 Hire for to pleese & don hire reuerence  
 Saue only the sothe that I schal sayn  
 Ialus he was & wolde haue kep here fayn 144  
 ffor hym were loth byapid for to bee  
 And so is euery wight in swich degre  
 But al in ydyl for it auaylyth noght  
 A good wif that is slene in werk & thought 148  
 Schulde not been kept in noon a-wayt certeyn  
 And trewely the labour is in veyn  
 To kepe a schrewe for it wele nat bee  
 This holde I for a verray vanytee 152  
 To spille labour for to kepe wivis  
 Thus wrytyn olde clerkis in here lyuys  
 But now to purpos as I ferst be-gan  
 This worthi phebus doth al that he can 156  
 To plesyn here / wenyng that sweche plesaunce  
 And for his manhede & hise gouernaunce  
 That no man schulde haue put hire from hire grace  
 But god it wot there may no man embrace 160  
 As to discryue a thyng / whiche that nature  
 Hath naturelly set in a cryature  
 // Take any thyng & put it in a cage [leaf 396]  
 And do al thyn entent & thyn corage 164  
 To fostere it tenderely with mete & drynk  
 Of alle deynteis that thow canst be-thynk  
 And keepe it also clenly as thow may  
 Al thow his cage of gold be neuere so gay 168

3it hath this bryd be twenty thousand fold	169
Leuere in a forest that is rude & cold	
Gon ete wermys & sweche wrechedenesse	
ffor euere this bryd wele doon his busynesse	172
To escapyn out of his cage 3if he may	
His lyberte this brid desiryth ay	
// Lat take a Cat & fostere hym weel with mylk	
And tendere flesch & make his couche of silk	176
And lat hym seen a mous goon by the wal	
A-non he weyvith Milk & flesch & al	
And eueri deynte that is in that hous	
Swich apetit hath he / to ete a mous	180
Loo heere hat lust his <i>dominacioun</i>	
And apetit flemyth discrecioun	
// A sche wolf hath also a dyuers kynde	
The lewedeste wolf that sche may fynde	184
Or lest of reputacioun that wele sche take	
In tyme whanne hire lust to han a make	
// Alle these ensaumplis speke I by these men	
That been ontrewē & no thyng by wemen	188
ffor men han euere a lykerous apetit	
On lowere thyng to parfornyn here delyt <sup>1</sup>	[ <sup>1</sup> delyt corrected]
Than on here wyuys ben they neuere so fayre	
Ne neuere so trewe ne neuere so debonayre	192
fflesch is so newefangil with myschaunce	
That we ne cunne in nothyng han plesaunce	
That sounyth in-to wertew only whyle	
This phebus which that thoughte on no gyle	196
Disceyuede was for al his Iolyte	
ffor vndyr hym a-nothir hadde sche	
A man of litil reputacioun	
Not worth to phebus in comparisoun	200
The more harm is it ofte happith so	[leaf 396, back]
Of whiche there comyth meche harm & wo	
And so be-fel that phebus was absent	
His wif a-non hath forth his leman sent	204

Hire leman Certis this is a knaunch speche	205
ffor <sup>1</sup> -zeuyth it me & that I 3ow be-seche	[ <sup>1</sup> r Arct 3]
The wyse plato seyth as 3e may reede	
The word mote nede a-corde with the dede	208
3if men schal telle propirly a thyng	
The word mot Cosyn be to the werkynge	
I am a boystous man ryght thus seye I	
Theere is no differens trewely	212
Be-twixe a wyf that is of high degre	
3if of hire body disonest sche be	
[And a pouer/ wenche othir/ than this/. [Harl. 1758, 1f 202, bk]	
If/ it so be thei wirke bothe a mys/.]	216
But that the gentile in hire stat a-boue	
Sche schal be clepid his lady as in loue	
And for that othir is a pore woman	
Sche schal be clepid his wenche or his lemman	220
And god it wot myn owene deere brothir	
Men leyn that on as as lowe / as lyth that othir	
// Righ so by-twixe a titeles tyraunt	
And an outlawe or a thef <sup>2</sup> erraunt	[ <sup>2</sup> er corrected] 224
The same I seye there is no difference	
To alysaundere was told this sentence	
That for the tyraunt is of grettere myght	
By force of meyne for to slen down ryght	228
And brennyng hous & hom & make al pleyn	
Lo therfore is he clepid a capitayn	
// And for the outlawe hat but smal meyne	
And may not doon so gret an harm as he	232
Ne brynge a cuntre to so greet myschif	
Men clepe hym an outlawe or a thef	
But for I am a man not textuel	
I wele not telle of textys neuere a del .	236
I wele go to myn tale as I be-gan	
Whan Phebus wif hath sent for hire leman	
Anon they wroughtyn al here lust volage	
The white Crowe that heng ay in the cage	240



Beheld here werk & seyde neuere a word [leaf 397]  
 And whan that hom was come Phebus the lord  
 This Crowe song Cokhow cokhow cokhow<sup>1</sup> [1 w first we]  
 // What brid quod Phebus what song syngist thow 244  
 Ne were thow wone so meryely to synge  
 That to myn herte it was a reioysynge  
 To here thyn voys allas what Ioye is this  
 By god quod he I synge nat a-mys 248  
 Phebus quod he for al thyn worthynes  
 ffor al thyn beute & thyn gentiles  
 ffor al thyn song & thyn menstralsye  
 ffor al thyn waytyng blered is thyn eye 252  
 With on of lytyl reputacioun  
 Nogh[t] worth to the in computacioun  
 The mountenaunce of a gnatte so mot I thryue  
 ffor on thyn bed thyn wif I saw hym swyue 256  
 What wele ȝe more the crowe a-non hym tollde  
 By sadde tokenys & bi wordis bolde  
 How that his wif hadde doon hire lecherye  
 Hym to gret schame & to greet vilenye 260  
 And tolde hym oftyȝ he saw it with hise yen  
 // This Phebus gan a-woyward for to wryen  
 And thouthe his sorweful herte brast a-to  
 His bowe he bente & sette therin a flo 264  
 And in his yre his wif thanne hath he slayn  
 This is theffect there is no more to seyn  
 ffor sorwe of which he brak his menstrelcie  
 Bothe harpe & lute geterne & sauterye 268  
 And ek he brak hise arwis & his bowe  
 And aftyr that thus spak he to the crowe  
 // Traytour quod he with tunge of Scorpioun  
 Thow hast me brought to myn confusioun 272  
 Allas that I was<sup>2</sup> wrought why nere I ded [2 was corrected]  
 O deere wyf o gemme of lustiheed  
 That were to me so sad / & ek so trewe  
 Now lyst thow deed / with face pale of hewe 276

fful gylteles that durste I swere I-wis	277
O rakele hand to don so foule a-mys	
O troubele wit O yre recheles	[leaf 597, back]
That on auysid smytist gilteles	280
¶ O wantrust ful of fals suspeciou	
Where was thyn wit & thyn discrecioun	
O eueri man be war of rakilnesse	
Ne trowe no thyng <i>with</i> -oute gret witenesse	284
Smyt nat to sore er than 3e wetyn why	
And beth auysed weel & sobirly	
Er 3e doon ony execucioun	
Vp-on 3oure yre for suspeciou	288
Allas a thousent folk han rakil yre	
fully fordon & brough hem in the myre	
Allas for sorw I wele myn seluyn sle	
And to the crowe o false thef quod he	292
I wele the quite a-non thyn false tale	
Thow sunge whilhom lich a Nyghtyngale	
Now schalt thow false thef thyn song forgon	
An ek thynne white federis euerichon	296
Ne neuere in al thyn lyf ne schalt tow speke	
Thus schal men on a traytour been a-wreke	
Thow & thynne ospryng / Schul been blake	
Ne neuere swete noyse schul 3e make	300
But euere crye a-3en tempest & reyn	
In tokenyng that thour the myn wif is slayn	
And to the Crowe he styrted & that a-non	
And pullede hise white federis euerychon	304
And made hym blak & raft hym al his song	
And ek his speche & out ate dore hym slong	
Vnto the devil whiche I hym be-take	
And for this cas been alle crowis blake	308
¶ Lordyngis by this exsauple I 3ow preye	
Beth war & takyth kep what that I seye	
.. Ne tellyth neuere no man In 3oure lyf	
How that a nothir man hath dyght his wyf	312

He wele 3ow hatyn mortally certeyn 313  
 Daun Salomon as wise clerkis seyn  
 Techith a man to kepe his tunge weel  
 But as I seyde I ne am not tixtuel 316  
 But natheles that taughte me myn dame [leaf 396]  
 // Myn sone thynke on the Crowe a godis name  
 Myn sone kep weel thyn tunge & kep thyn frend  
 A wekede tunge is werse than a feend 320  
 Myn sone from a feend men may hem blysse  
 Myn sone god of his endeles goodnesse  
 Wallede a tunge with teth & lippis ek  
 ffor man schulde hym a-vise what he spek 324  
 Myn sone ful ofte for to meche speche  
 Hath manye a man been spilt as clerkis teche  
 But for lytil speche auysely  
 I no man schent to speke generally 328  
 Myn sone thyn tunge schuldist thow restreyne  
 At alle tymys but whan thow dost thyn peyne  
 To speke of god in honour & preyere  
 // The fyrste vertu sone 3if thow wilt leere 332  
 Is to restreyne & kepe weel thyn tunge  
 Thus lernede childeryn whan that they ben 3onge  
 Myn sone of mekyl spekyng euele avysed  
 There lasse spekyng hadde I-now suffised 336  
 Comyth meche harm it was me told & taught  
 In mechil speche synne wantyth naught In multi-loquio non de-  
 Wist thow wh[e]rof rakyl tunge seruyth est peccatum.  
 Right as a swerd forkyttyth & for-keruyth 340  
 An arm on two myn deere sone ryght so  
 A tunge kytttyth frendsche[pe] al atwo  
 A Iangelere is to god abamynable  
 Reede salomon so wys & honorable 344  
 Reede Dauyth in hise psalmys rede Senekke  
 Myn sone spek nat but with thyn heed thow bekke  
 Dissymule as thow weere def 3if that thow heere  
 A Iangelere speke / of parlyous mateere 348

The flemyng seyth & lerne it ȝif the leste	349
That lytil Iangelyng causyth meche reste	
Myn sone ȝif thow no wekede word hast seyð	
The thar nat drede the for to been by-wreyd	352
But he that hath mysseyd / I dare weel sen	
He may by no weye clepe his word a-geyn	
Thyng that is seid / is seyð & forth it goth	[leaf 398, back]
Thow hym repente or be hym lef or loth	356
He is his thral to whom that he hath sayd	
A tale of whiche he is now euele apayed	
Myn sone be war & be non autour newe	
Of tydyngis whedyr they been false or trewe	360
Where so thow come a-mongis highe or lowe	
Keek weel thyn tunge & think vp-on the Crowe	362

**Here is endit the Mauncipett tale/**

## GROUP I. FRAGMENT X.

### § 1. THE BLANK-PARSON LINK.

[*This is really a link between some unwritten Tale and the Parson's. It has been made into the Manciple-Parson Link (or Yeoman-Parson by the Christ-Church MS) by Chaucer's copiers, though not meant for it.*]

#### CAMBRIDGE MS.

And here folwyn

the wordys of chaucer to the host [on leaf 398, back]

**B**Y that the Manciple hadde his tale I-endid  
The sunne from the south lyne was descendid  
So lowe that he ne was not to myn sight  
Degreis nynne & twenty as in hight 4  
Ten of the klok it was tho as I gesse  
ffor eleuene fote or lytil more or lesse  
Myn schadew was at tilke tyme as theere  
Of swiche feet as in myn lenthe partede weere 8  
In sexe feet equal of proporcoun  
Therwit[h] the <sup>1</sup>monys exaltacyoun<sup>1</sup> [1—<sup>1</sup> over an erasure]  
I mene libra alwey gan assende  
As we were enterynge at a thorpis ende 12  
ffor which oure host as he was wone to gye  
As in this cas this Ioly cumpaynye  
Seyde in this wise lordyngis euerichon  
Now lakkith vs no talys mo than on 16  
ffulfilld is myn sentence & myn decre  
I trowe that we han herd of eche deg[r]e  
Almost is fulfylld al myn ordenaunce  
I preye to god so ȝeue hym righ good chaunce 20  
That tellyth tis tale to vs lustily  
¶ Sere prest quod he art tow a vicary  
Or art a Persoun sey soth by thyn fey  
Be what thow be ne breke thow nat oure pleye<sup>2</sup>

[<sup>2</sup> leaves 399  
and 400 are  
cut out]



- [ffor euery man saue thou hath tolde his/ tale/. [Harl. 1758,  
leaf 204, bk]  
 Vn-bocle & schewe vs/ what/ is/ in thi male.  
 ffor truly me thynketh be thi chere.  
 Thou schuldist kny<sup>t</sup>/ vp weH/ a gret/ matere. 28  
 Telle vs/ a fable a-non for cockis/ bones/.  
 This/ Person answerde aH/ at/ ones.  
 Thou getist/ fable non y-tolde for me.  
 ffor Poule that/ writeth vn to Tymothe. 32  
 Repreunth hem that/ waifen sothfastnesse.  
 And tellen fablis/ & suche wrecchidnesse.  
 Whi schulde I schewen dra<sup>f</sup> out/ of/ my feste.  
 When I maie schewe whete if/ that/ me leste. 36  
 ffor whiche I seie if/ that/ thou list/ to here.  
 Moralite & vertuous/ matere.  
 And then that/ ye wolen ȝeue me audience.  
 I woH/ fuH/ feyne at/ cristes/ reuerence. 40  
 Don you plesaunce leefuH/ as/ I can.  
 But trustith weH/ I am a sothryn man.  
 I can noght/ geste rom ram ru<sup>f</sup> bi lettre.  
 Ne god woot/ rym holde I but liteH/ better. 44  
 And therefore if/ you list/ I woH/ noght/ glose.  
 I woH/ you telle a merye tale in prose.  
 To kny<sup>t</sup>/ vp aH/ this/ feste & make an ende.  
 And ihesu for his/ grace/ witt/ me sende. [leaf 205] 48  
 To schewe you the weie in this/ viage.  
 Of/ thilke parfite glorious/ pilgrymage.  
 That/ hight/ hierusalem celestiaH/.  
 And if/ ye vouche saf/ a-non ye schaH/. 52  
 Begynne vp on my tale for whiche I preie.  
 Telle your/ a-vys/ I can no better/ seie.  
 But/ natheles/ this/ meditacion.  
 I put/ hit/ aye vndir/ correccion. 56  
 Of/ clerkis/ for I am noght/ text/ weH/.  
 I take but/ the sentence trustith weH/.  
 Therefore I make protestacion.  
 That/ I woH/ stonde to correccion. 60

Vp on this/ word we han assentid sone. [Harl. 1756]  
 ffor as/ it/ semyd it/ was/ for to done.  
 To endyn in some vertuouse/ sentence.  
 And for to yeue hym space & audience. 64  
 And bad our/ Ost/ he schulde to hym seie.  
 That alle we to telle his/ tale we preie.  
 Our/ Ost/ had the wordis/ for vs/ alle.  
 Sir/ preest/ *quod* he now faire mote you bifalle. 68  
 Seie what/ you list/ & we schulen gladly here.  
 And with that/ word he seide in this/ manere.  
 Tellith *quod* he your/ meditacioun.  
 But/ hasteth you the sonne woH/ adoun. 72  
 Beth fructuous/ & that in liteH/ space.  
 And to do weH/ god sende you his/ grace. 74

Here endith the Prolog/.]

## THE PARSON'S TALE.

### A TREATISE ON PENITENCE, IN 3 PARTS :

- Part I. On **Penitence**, and its 1st requisite **Contrition** (A) (p. 593—612).  
 Part II. On its 2nd requisite, **Confession** (B) (p. 612—679).  
 Part III. On its 3rd requisite, **Satisfaction** (C) (p. 679—684), with the Writer's Leave-taking and Retractations (p. 684-85).

### PART I. (p. 593—612).

#### ON PENITENCE, AND ITS 1ST REQUISITE, CONTRITION.

Proem on Jeremiah vi. 16. The Tale is to be on *Penitence* as a full noble way to lead folk to Christ, and is to treat of

- i. 'what is Penitence' (p. 594).
  - ii. 'whennes it is cleped Penitence'. [*not in the Tale.*]
  - iii. 'in how manye maneres been the acciouns or werkynge of Penitence' (p. 594-5).
  - iv. 'how many speses ther been of Penitence' (p. 595).
  - v. 'whiche thynges apertenen and bihouen to Penitence' (p. 595—682: nearly all Parts I and III, and all Part II).
  - vi. 'whiche thynges destourben Penitence' (at end of Part III, p. 682) (p. 593).
  - i. **Penitence** defined, by *a.* St Ambrose; *b.* 'som doctour'; *c.* the writer. Its requisites: 1. bewailing of sins; 2. purpose to have shrift, to do satisfaction, never to sin again, to continue in good works (p. 594).
  - [ii. *not given.*]
  - iii. The 3 actions of Penitence: 1. Baptism after sin; 2. not to do deadly sin after baptism; 3. not thus to do venial sin (p. 594-95).
  - iv. The 3 speses or kinds of Penitence: 1. Solemn (to be put out of church, or do open penance); 2. Common (to go naked on pilgrimage); 3. Private (p. 595).
  - v. The 3 necessities or requisites for Penitence (p. 596—682):
    - A. **Contrition** of heart (p. 596—612).
    - B. **Confession** of mouth (Part II, p. 612—679).
    - C. **Satisfaction** (Part III, p. 679—682).
- Penitence avails against 3 things, by which we wrath Christ (p. 595).
- A. **Contrition** is the root of Penitence, whose stem bears branches and leaves of Confession, and fruit of Satisfaction.
- Contrition also bears a seed of grace, whose heat draws men to God. (Simile of the child and his nurse's milk.)
- Penance is the tree of life (p. 596).
- Four Points to be known about Contrition:
1. What it is; 2. the causes that move a man to it; 3. how to be contrite; 4. what it avails the soul (p. 597).
  2. The 6 Causes that should move a man to Contrition:
    - a. Remembrance of Sins (p. 597-8).
    - b. Whoso does sin is the Thrall of Sin (p. 598-99).
    - c. Dread of the Day of Doom and the Pains of Hell (p. 599—604).  
 These described: the Doom (p. 599-600); Job's 'lond of mysese and of derknesse' (p. 600-1); the 3 shames in hell against (1) 'Honours, (2) delices, and (3) riches' (p. 611); poverty in 4 things: no treasure, food, clothing, or friends (p. 602); and no delights of the 5 senses. The pain shall be eternal (p. 603). Hell is orderless (p. 603-4). The 7 causes why the damnd have lost all hope (p. 604).
    - d. Remembrance of the good works we've left undone, and the loss of the good works done while we were in sin (p. 604-6).  
 Deadly sin wipes out all good works formerly done (p. 605); and no good works can be done in deadly sin (p. 605-6).  
 The new French song, *J'ai tout perdu mon temps* (also quoted in Chaucer's late poem of *Fortune*).

- e. Remembrance of Christ's suffering for our sins (p. 606). 'In man's sin, every ordinance is turnd up-so-down (p. 607). For this disorder Christ sufferd (p. 608).
- f. The hope of 3 things: 1. Forgiveness of Sins, 2. the Gift of Grace to do well, 3. the Glory of Heaven (p. 609).
- 3. How to be contrite. Contrition must be universal and total: for sins of thought, for desires against God's law, for wicked words as well as wicked deeds (p. 610). Contrition must be angwishous and continual (p. 609-11).
- 4. How Contrition helps the soul. It sometimes delivers a man from sin; destroys the prison of hell; cleanses the soul; changes the son of Wrath to the son of Grace (p. 611-12).

## PART II (no. v. continued).

### B. CONFESSION (THE 2ND REQUISITE FOR PENITENCE) (p. 612-679).

- B. Confession. § 1. (l. 317) 'what is confession' (p. 612).
  - § 2. 'wheither it oghte nedes be doon or noon' (p. 672-9).
  - § 3. 'whiche thynges been couenable to verray Confession' (p. 674-79).

#### CONFESSION, § 1.

- 1. 'Confession is verray shewyng of synnes to the preest' (l. 318) (p. 612). We must understand too
  - a. (l. 321) 'whennes that synnes spryngen' (p. 612-15).
  - b. 'how they encreessen' (p. 615-16; 672-74).
  - c. 'whiche they been' (p. 616-672).
- 1.a. Sin sprang from the fall of Adam (p. 612). The legend of Adam and Eve told (p. 613). From Adam we took Original Sin, and were born sons of eternal damnation; but Baptism rescues us; though we keep liability to temptation, or Concupiscence (p. 613-14).
 

*Concupiscence*, or the nourishing and occasion of sin. St Paul and St Jerome's temptations (p. 614-15).
- 1.b. How Sin grows in a man. 1. by Concupiscence; 2. Subjection to the Devil; 3. Hesitation; 4. Doing, the Sin becoming Actual (p. 615-16).
- 1.c. Sin is *α*. venial, *β*. deadly (or mortal).
  - a. 1. Venial Sin defined. It skips into Deadly Sin. (Simile of the drops of water into a vessel's hold drowning the ship;) (p. 616).
  - β. 1. Deadly Sin defined (p. 617).
  - a. 2. Of divers small venial sins, hardly thought sins (p. 617-18); eating, drinking, talking, too much; using your wife too much; not visiting the sick (p. 617); talking vanities at church, &c. (p. 618). Cure of venial sins by love to Christ, prayer, confession, good works, receiving the Sacrament, holy-water, &c. (p. 618).
- 1.c. β. 2. *The Seven Deadly Sins*. The Chieftains, head and spring, of all other Sins (p. 619).
  - i. Pride (p. 619-26), and its Remedy (p. 626-8).
  - ii. Envy (p. 628-30), and its Remedy (p. 630-1).
  - iii. Ire or Anger (p. 631-42), and its Remedy (p. 642-5).
  - iv. Accidie or Sloth (Discontent, Ennui) (p. 645-49), and its Remedy (p. 650-1).
  - v. Avarice or Covetousness (p. 651-7), and its Remedy (p. 657-8).
  - vi. Gluttony (p. 658-9), and its Remedy (p. 660).
  - vii. Lechery (p. 660-8), and its Remedy (p. 668-72).
- i. PRIDE (p. 619-626). Its 16 (and more) Twigs. 1. Disobedience, 2. Boasting, 3. Hypocrisy, 4. Despite, 5. Arrogance (p. 619), 6. Impudence, 7. Swelling of Heart (rejoicing in harm done), 8. Insolence, 9. Elation, 10. Impatience, 11. Contumacy, 12.



Presumption, 13. Irreverence, 14. Pertinacity, 15. Vain-glory, 16. Jangling (chattering).

A private kind of pride (the Host's Wife's and Wife of Bath's<sup>1</sup>), wanting to go to offering first, &c. (p. 620).

Two kinds of Pride, *a.* 'within man's heart', *b.* without; *b.* being the sign of *a.*, 'as the gaye leefsel atte Taverne is sign of the wyn that is in the Celer'<sup>2</sup> (p. 620-21), *b.* outside pride.

*a.* in dear clothing, 1. superfluity of it: its cost, furring, chisel-holes, dragging in the dung, waste of material (p. 621), unfitness for giving to the poor: 2. scantness of it: showing men's privy members, and buttocks (like a she-ape's rump), and the former as half-flayd, in parti-coloured hose<sup>3</sup>. The 'outrageous array of Women' (p. 623).

*β.* in horses (p. 623), and vicious grooms to tend 'em; plate-harness, &c.

*γ.* in household: keeping too many retainers or servants, who oppress the poor (p. 624).

*δ.* in table: not asking the poor to feasts; having burning and ornamented dishes<sup>4</sup>; too costly cups, &c., and too choice minstrelsy (p. 624).

What Pride sins are deadly, and what venial (p. 624).

The Sources of Pride (p. 624): goods of Nature, Fortune, Grace (p. 624). The Folly of Pride in any of these goods of Nature:

'we ben alle of o fader and of o mooder, and . . . of o nature'<sup>5</sup>.

The general signs of *Gentleness*. (The flies calld 'bees', and their stingless king) (p. 625); 3 gifts of Grace; 3 of Fortune.

The brittleness of popular praise<sup>6</sup> (p. 626).

#### *The Remedy against Pride.*

Humility or Meekness, and its 3 kinds: in 1. heart, 2. mouth, 3. works. 4 kinds of each of these (p. 626-27).

ii. ENVY (p. 627-30): defined by the Philosopher and St Augustine. It springs from Malice (p. 627).

Malice; 2 kinds of: 1. hardness of heart, or recklessness; 2. opposing truth (p. 627).

The 2 kinds of Envy (p. 628): 1. sorrow at other men's prosperity; 2. joy at other men's harm: whence comes

Backbiting; 5 kinds (p. 628): 1. praise with a *but* at the end; 2. turning well-meant things upside down to ill ones; 3. lessening a neighbour's goodness; 4. putting one man above another; 5. glad listening to scandal (p. 628).

Grudging or murmuring (p. 628): 1. against God (p. 629); 2. Murmuring from avarice, 3. from pride, 4. from envy; 5. among Servants, who say 'the Devil's *Paternoster*'; 6. Murmuring from ire or hate: thence, *a.* Bitterness of Heart, *b.* Discord, *c.* Scorning; *d.* Accusing (p. 629); *e.* Malignity (p. 630).

#### *The Remedy against Envy* (p. 630-31).

Love of God and one's neighbour. How a man shall love his neighbour. How an enemy is included in the name 'neighbour' (p. 630). 3 Remedies of Love, against 3 deeds of Hate (p. 631). Love is the medicine that casts out the venom of Envy from man's heart (p. 631).

iii. IRE or ANGER (p. 631-42), and its 2 kinds: *a.* good Ire or Wrath (p. 632); *b.* wicked Ire, and its 2 kinds: sudden ire, and ire of malice aforethought (p. 632-33).

Three Shrews that forge in the Devil's furnace: Pride, Envy, and Contumely (p. 633).

<sup>1</sup> Melibe-Monk Link, B. § 11; and General Prologue, A.

<sup>2</sup> Chaucer's father no doubt had a sign outside his wine-shop or tavern in Thames Street, London.

<sup>3</sup> The outspoken and somewhat coarse abuse of the new fashions in dress is a great change from Chaucer's admirable Third-Period chaff of the moral short-comings of the monks and friars, &c., in the Prologue and middle Tales. If this is not change of man, it's change of mood.

<sup>4</sup> Chaucer must have seen plenty of these when he was page, valet, and squire.

<sup>5</sup> Compare Chaucer's *Gentleness*, &c. <sup>6</sup> Compare Clerk's Tale, Part VI, st. 135.



Wrath takes away a man's wit and spiritual life (p. 634).

Fruits of Wrath: 1. Hate. 2. War and wrong. 3. Manslaughter, a. spiritual; b. bodily (p. 634).

a. The 3 kinds of spiritual Manslaughter (3, calld 6 in MSS. p. 634): 1. by Hate. 2. by Backbiting. 3. Giving wicked Counsel, by Fraud (p. 634).

b. bodily Manslaughter: slaying with your tongue, giving orders or counsel to slay a man (p. 634).

Manslaughter in deed: its 4 (that is, 7) kinds (p. 635): 1. by law: a Justice condemning a man to death; 2. justifiable homicide, in defence of one's own life; 3. by misadventure: shooting an arrow, &c.; 4. a woman overlying her child; 5. a man making a woman barren by drinks, &c., killing the fetus within her, shedding his seed in the wrong place; a woman killing the child in her womb; 6. a woman killing her child (after birth) for shame; 7. a man by lechery or blows killing a fetus.

(Sixteen) other sins coming from Ire or Anger.

1. blaming or despising God, as hazards do (Cp. *Pardoner's Tale*) (p. 635); and those who treat of the Sacrament of the altar irreverently (p. 636).

2. Attry anger: making angry false excuses for sin.

3. Swearing, which dismembers Christ (p. 636).

a. Of lawful Swearing, before a Judge: its 3 conditions, and its motives; b. God's name and Christ's, not to be taken in vain (p. 637); c. swearing for gentility or manliness (p. 638); d. swearing suddenly; e. of Adjuration and Conjurat[i]on by enchanter[s] and necromancer[s]; f. of Divination by Dreams, &c.; g. of Charms for Wounds and Maladies (p. 638).

4. Lying (p. 638), and its 6 kinds.

5. Flattering. How Flatterers are the Devil's Nurses, his Enchanters and Chaplains (p. 639).

6. Cursing that comes of irous heart: Malison.

7. Chiding and Reproach (p. 640); (specially a chiding wife<sup>1</sup>) (p. 640-41).

8. Scorning (p. 641).

9. Giving wicked Counsel (p. 641).

10. Sowing and making Discord (p. 642).

11. Double tongue (p. 642).

12. Betraying of Counsel (p. 642).

13. Menace.

14. Idle words.

15. Jangling (chattering) (p. 642).

16. Japing (joking) (p. 642-43).

*The Remedy against Anger* (p. 643-5). Debonairtee and Patience (p. 643). Four kinds of grievances, and their remedies: 1. wicked words, 2. loss of goods, 3. harm of body, 4. outrageous labour (p. 644).

Incentives to Patience. Story of the Philosopher and Child (p. 644-45). Obedience comes from Patience (p. 645).

iv. ACCIDIE, or SLOTH (Discontent, Ennui) (p. 645-49), is an enemy to the 3 states of man.—1. innocence (p. 645), 2. prayer (p. 646), 3. grace;—and to one's livelihood. Its 12 bad consequences (p. 646): 1. Sloth (and its remedy); 2. Dread to begin good works (p. 646); 3. Wanhope, or Despair (and its Remedy) (p. 647); 4. Somnolence (p. 648), and 5. Negligence, or 6. Recklessness, and the Remedy for each; 7. Idleness; 8. *Tarditas*, or tarrying before turning to God (p. 649); 9. Lachesse, or giving up a good work begun; 10. Coldness; 11. Undevotion; 12. Worldly sorrow (p. 649).

*The Remedy against Accidie* (p. 650-51): Fortitude or Strength, and its 5 kinds. 1. Magnanimity<sup>2</sup> or great Courage; 2. Faith or Hope; 3. Assurance; 4. Magnificence; 5. Constancy (p. 651).

<sup>1</sup> Does Chaucer here refer to his former wife?

<sup>2</sup> Miswritten 'Magnificence' in Ellesmere and Lansdowne MSS.

- v. **AVARICE** (p. 651-57). The difference between Avarice and Covetousness (p. 651); and between an Idolater and an avaricious man (p. 652). Of Covetousness, and lords' extortion from their bondmen: "humble folk been Cristes freendes" (p. 652-53). The Duty of lords to their thralls or churls. Of those that pillage Holy Church (p. 653-54); lords who plunder the poor are like wolves (p. 654). Of Deceit between Merchant and Merchant (p. 654). Of honest bodily Merchandise (the surplus of one country may be sent to help another) (p. 654). Of spiritual Merchandise, or Simony, and its 2 kinds (p. 655),—thieves that steal Christ's souls get livings (p. 655-56);—Hasardry or Games of Chance (p. 656). Other outcomes of Avarice (p. 656): 1. Lying, 2. Theft (bodily and spiritual) (p. 656-57), 3. False Witness, 4. False Oaths (p. 657).

*The Remedy against Avarice* (p. 657): Mercy and Pity, and reasonable Liberality (p. 658). Of foolish largess (p. 658).

- vi. **GLUTTONY** (p. 658-59), and its 5 kinds (p. 659): 1. Drunkenness, or the burial of man's reason; 2. a troubled spirit; 3. bad way of eating; 4. distemperd bodily humours; 5. forgetfulness. Or, as St Gregory says, 1. eating too soon; 2. eating too delicate food; 3. taking too much; 4. troubling too much about cooking food; 5. eating greedily: these are the 5 fingers of the devil's hand (p. 659).

*The Remedy against Gluttony* (p. 660): Abstinence, and its fellows. Temperance, Shame, Content with plain food, Moderation, Sobriety, Sparing (p. 660).

- vii. **LECHERY** (p. 660). Its punishment in the Old Testament (p. 660). Adultery, and the desire of it (p. 661-62).

The 5 fingers of the Devil's other hand (p. 662); 1. foolish looking; 2. villainous touching; 3. foul words; 4. kissing (old doctards, and dry dogs at a rose-tree (p. 662); and how a man should love his wife); 5. the stinking deed of lechery (p. 663). Its 5 kinds: 1. Fornication. Taking a maid's maidenhead, or 100th fruit (p. 663). 2. Adultery, defined. 3. Harms following from it: *a.* breaking of faith; *b.* theft (of the wife's body from her husband (Joseph and Potiphar's wife), and of her soul from Christ); *c.* breaking God's commandment, and defouling Christ (p. 664). Of Harlots and Bawds (p. 665). Adultery is set between Theft and Manslaughter. More kinds of Adultery: 1. by Men bound by Religious Vows, &c.; 2. those in Holy Orders (p. 665). Lecherous Priests are like a free Bull in a town, and they eat raw flesh of folk's wives and daughters (p. 666); 3. by man and wife copulating for pleasure only (p. 667); 4. copulation with kinsfolk, spiritual (or godchildren) or fleshly (blood relations). 5. the abominable unmentionable sin; 6. Pollution, of 3 kinds: 1. too rank humours; 2. weakness (p. 667); 3. evil thoughts (p. 668).

*The Remedy for Lechery* (p. 668): I. Chastity and Continence.

1. in Marriage. (The true effect of Marriage. One husband to have one wife (p. 668). How a man should behave to his wife (p. 669). How the wife should be subject to her husband (p. 669), and be moderate in behaviour, discreet in words, &c. (p. 669-70). The 3 causes for which man and wife may copulate (p. 670): *a.* begetting of children; *b.* to pay the mutual debt of their bodies; *c.* to avoid lechery (p. 670). The 4th cause, pleasure, is deadly sin (p. 670-71).)
2. In Widowhood; 3. Virginity (p. 671).

- II. Special avoidance of causes of lechery: *a.* eating and drinking; long sleeping; *b.* the person who'd tempt you (p. 671-72). (I wish I could tell you the Ten Commandments; but it's too high doctrine (p. 672).) [End of *Confession*, § 1, *c.*]

Sin is in heart, mouth, deed, by the 5 Wits (p. 672).

- § 1. *b.* (see p. 615-16.) The 7 Circumstances that increase or aggravate sins (p. 672). 1. the person who sins (male or female, &c.); 2. the kind of sin (fornication or homicide); 3. the place it was committed in (as in a church, by a priest) (p. 673); 4. for what motive; 5. the number of times it was committed; 6. by what temptation; 7. how it was committed; and all other circumstances (p. 674).

### CONFESSION, § 2, § 3 (p. 674-79).

*Profitable Confession, and its 4 (= 3) Conditions* (p. 674):

1. sorrowful bitterness of heart (p. 674); its 5 signs: *a.* shamefastness (like the Publican's) (p. 675); *b.* humility; *c.* fulness of tears (p. 675); *d.* no hesitation (like the Magdalen) for shame; *e.* obedience to receive penance laid on you (p. 675).
2. speedy Confession (p. 676); its 4 Conditions: *f.* that it be well thought over; *g.* the greatness and number of sins must be understood; *h.* the sinner must be contrite, and *i.* avoid occasions of sins.
3. Shrift must be made to one man, not more (p. 676).

*True Shrift, and its 10 Conditions* (p. 677): 1. that it be of free will; 2. that it be lawful (both sinner and priest, Popish); 3. that it be not despairing of Christ's mercy; 4. that a man accuse himself only, and not another; 5. that it be not lying (accusing oneself of sins never committed) (p. 678); that it be by one's own mouth, and not by letter; 7. that the sin be not painted with fair words; 8. that the shrift be to a discreet priest; 9. that the shrift be not made for vain-glory, but for fear of Christ; 10. that the shrift be not made suddenly, for a joke (p. 678). You may be shriven more than once for the same sin; and should be houseld once a year (p. 679).

### PART III (*no. v. continued, and no. vi.*).

#### SATISFACTION (THE 3RD REQUISITE FOR PENITENCE) (p. 679-684).

In *a.* Alms. *β.* bodily punishment.

*a.* *Alms and its three kinds* (p. 679): 1. Contrition of heart. 2. Pity for one's neighbour's faults. 3. Giving good counsel to other's souls and bodies (food, visits in prison, burial). These Alms should be done privily, if possible (p. 680).

*β.* *Bodily Punishment (Penance), of 4 kinds*: 1. Prayers (chiefly of the Paternoster, whose expounding I leave to Masters of Theology) (p. 680). 2. Watching, and its 3 kinds: forbearing, *a.* meat and drink, *b.* worldly jollity, and *c.* deadly sin (p. 681). 3. Fasting, and its 4 kinds: Liberality to poor folk; spiritual gladness of heart; not grudging at fasting; reasonable eating. 4. Virtuous teachings, or Discipline: *a.* by word, writing, or example; *b.* by wearing hairshirts, &c., next your skin, scourging yourself, taking evils and injuries patiently (p. 682). [End of *no. v.* in Part i; p. 593.]

*vi.* The 4 Things that disturb Penance [*no. vi.* or last §, of p. 593 at foot] (p. 682). 1. Dread, and its remedy. 2. Shame, and its remedy. 3. Hope: *a.* of long life, and *b.* consequent overconfidence in Christ's mercy (p. 683). 4. Wanhope, or Despair of Mercy; its 3 kinds: *x.* from great and long continued sin; *y.* from falls-back into sin; *z.* from not being able to persevere in goodness (p. 683).

The fruit of Penance (p. 683-4).

#### EPILOGUE.

The Author's Leave-taking, and Lament over, and Withdrawal of, his Sinful Books, &c. (p. 684-85).



[Harl. MS 1758, leaf 205, for Cambr. MS.]

[There are no paragraph-breaks in the MS, but Tyrnwhitt's are kept in the print for convenience sake. The many curls, tags, and lines, to final e/, f/, g/, ll/, r/, s/, t/ in Harl. 1758, are not printed here.]

[Harl. 1758, on  
leaf 205]

[And begynneth the tale.

Ierl. 6°. State super vias & videte & interrogate de semitis antiquis que sit via bona & ambulate in ea & inuenietis refrigerium animabis vestris.

[75]

**O**ur swete lord god of heuyn þat no man wolþ perische, but wiþ þat we comen alle to þe knoweliche of hym. & to the blisful lif þat is perdurable. [76] Amonyscheth vs bi þ<sup>e</sup> prophet Ieremie. þat seith in this wise. [77] ¶ Stondith vp on þ<sup>e</sup> weies & seeth & axep of olde pathees. þat is to seyn of olde sentences whiche is þ<sup>e</sup> good weie. [78] & walkip in þat weie & ye scholen fynde refreschyng for your soulis. & cetera. [79] ¶ Manye ben þe weies espirituels þat ledyn folk to our lord ihesu crist & to the Regne of glorie. [80] Of whiche weies ther is a full noble weie & a full couenable whiche maie noght faile to man ne to woman that thorough synne hath mys goon fro the right weie of Hierusalem celestiaH. [81] And this weie is clepid penytence. of whiche men schuldyn gladly herkyn & enquere with aH his hert [82] to wite what his pen-aunce & whens it is clepid penytence. & in how mony maneres ben the accions of worchyng of penytence [83] & how manye spices ther ben of penytences & whiche thynges a-pertenyn & bi-houyn to penytence. <sup>1</sup>Whiche thynges distourben penytence.

[Nota de peni-  
tencia. .]]

[84] Seynt Ambrose seith that penytence is the ¶ What is penytence  
 playnyng of man for the gilt that he hath doon. & no  
 more to doon ony thyng for whiche hym ought to pleyne.  
 [85] ¶ And som doctour seith. Penytence is the weyment-  
 yng of man that sorwith for his synne & pyneth  
 hym self for he hath mys doon. [86] Penytence with  
 certeyn circumstaunces is very repentaunce of man that  
 holdeþ hym self in sorow & other peyne for his giltyes.  
 [87] & for he schaff be verye penytent. he schaff first  
 be-weilen the synnes that he hath doon. And stidfastly  
 purposid in his herte to haue schrift of mouthe. & to  
 don satisfaccion [88] & neuyr to do thyng. ffor whiche  
 hym oughte more to be-weile or to compleyne & to con-  
 tynue in good werkis or ellis his repentaunce maie noght  
 a-vaile. [89] ¶ ffor as seith seynt Isidre. He is a iaper & ¶ Isiderus.  
 a gabber & no very repentaunt man that efte sone doth  
 thyng for whiche hym ought to repent [90] wepyng  
 & noght for to styntet to do synne may noght a-vaile. [91] ¶ But  
 natheles men schulen hope that at euery tyme that man  
 falleth be it neuyr so ofte that he may arise thorogh peny-  
 tence if he haue grace. ¶ But certeynly hit is gret doute.  
 [92] for as seith seynt Gregorie. vnnethes ariseth he out ¶ Gregorius.  
 of his synne that is charged with the charge of yueþ vsage.  
 [93] ¶ And therefore repentaunt folk that stynte for to  
 synne & for to lete synne er that synne for-lete hym. holi-  
 chirche holdith hem siker of her sauacion. [94] And  
 he that synneth & verrily repentith hym in his last ende.  
 Holi chirche yet hopith his sauacion bi the gret  
 mercy of our lord ihesu crist for his repentaunce but  
 take the sikerer weie. & þ<sup>e</sup> more certeyn.

[95] ¶ And now sethyns I haue declarid you what  
 thyng is penytence. Now schulen ye vndirstonde that ther ¶ Tres sunt ac-  
 ciones peni-  
 tencie  
 1<sup>a</sup>. accion of  
 penytence.  
 ben thre accions of penytence. [96] ¶ The first is  
 that if a man be baptiste after that he hath  
 synned. [97] seynt Austyn seith. but he be penytence ¶ Augustinus.  
 for his olde synfull lif he may not be-gynne the newe



elene lif. [98] ffor certis if he be baptised with out penytence of his olde gilt. he receyueþ þ<sup>e</sup> mark of baptisme. but not the grace ne the remysson of his synnes tilþ he haue verraye repentaunce. [99] ¶ Another defeaute is this that men doon deedly synne after that ¶ .2. accion. thei haue receyued baptisme. [100] The þrid defeaute ¶ .3. accion. is that men fallen in venyall synnes aftir her baptisme. fro daie to daye. [101] Ther of seith seynt Austyn. ¶ Augustinus that penytence of good & humble folk is the penytence of euery daie.

[102] ¶ The spices of penaunce ben thre: that oon ¶ The spices of penytence. of hem is solempne. Another is comune. & the

.3. is pryue. [103] ¶ Thilk penaunce that is so- ¶ of penaunce solempne. lempne is in two maneres. as is to be put out of holy

chirche in lente for slaughter of childryn & suche maner thyng. [104] ¶ Another is when a man ¶ Of open penaunce. hath synned openly of whiche synne the fame is openly

spoken in the contre. ¶ And then holy chirche bi Iuge- ment distreyneth hym for to do penaunce opene. [105]

Som penaunce is that preestis enioynen<sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup>men in certeyn ¶ Harl. 1758 extract ends] cas / As for to goon parauenture nakid in pilgrymage ¶ Cambr. begins, leaf 401] or barefot. [106] ¶ Pryue penaunce is thilke that

men doon alday for certeyn synnys that been priue / of whiche we schryue vs pryuely / & receyue priue penaunce

[107] ¶ Now schalt thou vnderstonde what is behoffly & necessarie to verray perfit penytence & this stant on thre thyngis. [108] Contrycioun of herte / Confessioun of mouthe / & Satisfaccioun / [109] For whiche seyth seynt Iohn Crisostomus ¶ Penytence constrynyth a man to accepte benyngnely euery payne that is enioyned hym. with contricioun of herte & schrifte of mouthe. with Satisfaccioun. And in werkyng of alle manere humylite / [110] And this is freutful penytence a-geyn .iiij. thyngis. in wheche we wrethe oure lord Ihesu cryst / [111] this is to seyenne / by delyt in thynkyng / by recheles-nesse in spekyng And be wikkede synful werkyng / [112] And a-geyn these

wekede giltis is penytence that may be likkenyd vntil a tree,

[113] ¶ The rote of this tre is contricioun / that hydyth  
hym in the herte that is verray repentaunt / righ as  
the rote of a tre: hydyth hym in the erthe. [114] ¶ Of the  
rote of contricioun spryngith a stalke that berith braunchis  
& leuys of Confessioun & freut of satisfaccioun [115]  
¶ for whiche Crist seyth in his gospel / Doth digne freut of  
penytence / for by this freut may men knowe this  
tree / & not by the rote that is hid in the herte  
of man ne bi the braunchis ne by the leuys of Confessioun.  
[116] And therefore oure lord Ihesu Crist seyth thus by  
the freut of hem: schul 3e knowyn hem. [117] ¶ Of this  
roote ek spryngith a seed of grace the whiche seed: is  
modir of sekyrnesse / & this seed is egre & hoot /  
[118] the grace of this seed spryngith of god thourw re-  
membraunce of the day of doome / & on the peynys of  
helle [119] ¶ Of this mateere seyth Salomon that in  
drede of god / man forletyth his synne / [120] the heete  
of this seed is the loue of god / & desyrynge of the  
Ioye perdurable / [121] this heete drawith the herte of  
man to god / & doth hym hate his synne / [122] For  
sothly there is nothyng that saurith so weel to a child  
as the mylk of his noryce / ne no thyng is <sup>1</sup>to hyre selvyn:<sup>2</sup>  
more abomynabele / [ . . . . . [<sup>3</sup> *e selvyn*: corrected] . .

. . . . .  
. . . . .  
. . . . .  
. . . . . [<sup>3</sup> *nd corrected*] . .

. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] [125] for  
sothly the lawe of god: is the loue of god / For whiche  
Dauid the prophete seyth / I have lowyd thyn lawe / & hatid  
wekedenesse And<sup>3</sup> he that lounth god: kepith his lawe & his  
word / [126] This tre saw the prophete danyel / in spiryt  
vp-on the auysioun of Nabugodonosor whanne he con-  
seyled / hym to do penytence [127] Penaunce is the tre  
of lyf / to hem that it resceyuyn / And he that holdyth hym

in verray penytence is blyssid aftyr the centence of Salomon /

[128] ¶ In this penitence / or contricioun / man schal vnderstondyn .iiij. thyngis That is to seyne what is contricioun / & whiche been the causis that meyn a man / to Contricioun / & how he schulde been contryte / & what Contricioun awaylyth to the Soule / [129] ¶ Thanne is it thus / that contricioun is the verray sorwe that a man resceyuyth in his herte for hise synnys with sad purpos / to schryue hym & to do penaunce & neuere moore to do synne / [130] And this sorwe schal been in this maneere / as seith seynt bernard /. It schal ben heuy. & greuouse / & ful scharp & poygnaunt in herte. [131] ¶ ffyrst for man hath a-gilt his lord / & his Creature / & more scharp & poynaunt for he hath [. . . . . [132] . . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] wrathid / & agilt hym that bought hym / that with his precious blod hath delyuered vs from the bond of synne / & from the crewelte of the deuyl And from the peynys of helle

[133] ¶ The causys that oughtyn to meue a man to contricioun: been sexe / ¶ ffyrst a man schal remembre hym of hise synnys / [134] but loke that thilke remembraunce / be to hym no delyt / be no weye / but gret schame & sorwe for hise synnys / ffor Iob seith synful men don werkys worthy of Confescioun / [135] & therefore seith esechie ¶ I wele remembre me alle the 3erys of myn lyf in the bittirnesse of myn herte / [136] ¶ And god seith in the apocalipse ¶ Remembre 3ow from whene 3e been falle / for by-fore that tyme that 3e synned: 3e were the childeren of god / & lemys of the regne of god / [137] but for 3oure synne 3e been wexen thral. & foul & menbris of the deuyl / hate of aungeH / Schlaundere of holy cherche And foode of the false serpent / perpetuel mater of the fer of helle [138] / & 3it moore foul & abomynable for the trespasyn so ofte tyme as doth an hound / that retornyth to ete his spewynge / [139] And 3it

been 3e more foulere: for 3oure longe contynuyng therin / &  
 3oure synful vsage / for whiche 3e been rotyn in 3oure  
 synne: as beste in his dunge [140] Sweche manere of  
 thoughtis makyn a man to haue schame of hise synnys /  
 & no delit / As god seyth by the prophete Ezechiel /  
 [141] 3e schal remembre 3ow of 3oure weis / And thi  
 schul displese 3ow sothly / Synnys been the weyis that  
 ledyn folk to helle [142]

**T**He secunde cause that oughte to meue a man  
 to haue disdeyn of synne: is this / as seith seint  
 Petyr / who so that doth synne is thral of synne / &  
 synne puttyth a man in gret thraldam / [143] And ther-  
 fore seyth the prophete Ezechiel / I wente sorweful in  
 disdeyn of myn self ¶ Certis weel ouzte a man /  
 haue disdayn of synne & withdrawyn hym from that  
 thraldam & vilenye / [144] And lo what seyth Seneca /  
 in this matere he seith thus ¶ Thow I wiste that  
 / neythir god ne man ne schulde neuere knowe it / 3it  
 wolde I haue disdayn for to do synne / [145] And the  
 same Seneca also seyth / I am born to grettere thyngis /  
 than to ben thral to myn body . or than for to makyn of myn  
 body a thral / [146] ne a foulere thral may no man  
 maken of his body: than for to 3euyn his body  
 to synne / [147] Al were it the fouleste cherl or the  
 fouleste woman / that leuyth & lest of valew / 3it is he  
 thanne more foul & moore in seruitute / [148] euere  
 from the heyere degre that man fallyth: the more is he  
 thral / & the moore to god & to the world vile & abomyn-  
 nable/[149] ¶ O goode god weloughte man haue greet disdeyn  
 of synne / sythe that thorw synne / there he was fre /  
 now is he makid bonde / [150] And therefore seyth seynt  
 Augustyn ¶ If thow haue disdayn of thyn seruau[n]t / 3if he  
 haue gilt or synne Haue thow thanne disdayn / that thow  
 thyn self schuldyst doon synne / [151] take reward of thyn  
 value / that thow ne be to foul to thyn self // [152]  
 Also weel auzte they thanne haue disdayn / to been



seruauntys & thralles to synne & soore been aschamyd /  
 of hem self / [153] that <sup>1</sup>god of his endeles goodnesse /  
 hat set hem in high estat or 3euy<sup>n</sup> hem wit strenthe /  
 hele of body / beute prosperite / [154] &  
 boughte hem from the deth with his herte blood that  
 they so onkendely azens his gentillesse / quytyn hym so  
 vileynly to slauthere of here owene soules. [155] O  
 goode god / the wemen that been of greet beute.  
 remembrith 3ow of the prouerbe of salomon / he seyth  
 [156] & likkenyth a fayr woman þat is a fol of hire body :  
 lik to a ryng of gold / þat were in the groyn of a sowe /  
 [157] ffor rygh as a Sowe wrothith in eueryche ordure : so  
 wrotith sche hire beute / in styntyng ordure of synne [158]

**T**He thredde cause þat oughte to meue a man  
 to contrycioun : is drede of the day of dome & of the  
 horrible peynys of helle / [159] ffor as seynt Ierom seith  
 At every tyme that me remembrith of the day of dome : I  
 quake. [160] for whan I ete or drynke or what so euere I  
 do / euere semyth me that the trumpe sounyth in myn ere.  
 [161] Ryseth 3e vp that been dede & comyth to the  
 Iugement. [162] O goode god meche ouzte a man to  
 drede / swich a Iugement / there as we schul been alle  
 as seynt poule seyth by fore the cete of oure lord Ihesu  
 Cryst / [163] where as he schal makyn a general con-  
 gregacioun / where as no man may Been absent / [164] for  
 certis there auaylith non esoyne ne excusacioun /  
 [165] And not only that oure fautis schuln ben  
 Iugit. but that alle oure werkis schuln opynly  
 been knowe / [166] And as seyth seynt Bernard / There ne  
 schal no pledyng auayle ne no slyzte / we schul 3eue  
 rekyng / of euery Idele wod [167] there schul we han  
 a Iuge / þat may not ben disseyued ne corrupt / And why /  
 ffor certis al oure thouztis been discryued as to hym /  
 ne for preyer ne for mede he schan not ben corrupt /  
 [168] And therefore seyth salomon / the wrethe of god  
 [ . . . . . ] *no gap in the MS.*



ne wele not spare no wight / for preyere ne for ȝifte / And  
 therefore at the day of dome / there is non hope to escape /  
 [169] wherefore as seyth seynt Anselm ¶ Ful gret  
 angwisch schul the synful soulis haue at that tyme  
 [170] there schal the sterne & wrothe Iuge / sitte a-boue /  
 & vndyr hym the horryble pit of helle / opyn to di-  
 stroyen hem that mot beknowyn here synnys / whiche  
 synnys opynly ben <sup>1</sup>schewid by-foryn god / & beforyn  
 euery cryature / [171] And on the left syde / mo deyllis  
 than herte may bethynke / For to harye & drawe /  
 the synful soulis to the pit of helle / [172] And with-  
 inne the hertis of folk. schal be the bytynge concience  
 And withoute folk: schal be the world / al brennynge /  
 [173] whedyr schal thanne the wrechede synful man fle  
 to hidyn hym certys he may not hidyn hym / he muste  
 come forth & schewyn hym / [174] For certis as seyth  
 seynt Ierom / the erthe schal caste hym out of hym /  
 & the se also / & the eyr also / that schal ben ful of  
 thundyr clappis / & lyghtenyngis [175] ¶ Now sothly  
 ho so wele remembre hym / of these thyngis / I gesse  
 that his synne schal not turne hym in-to delyt / but to greet  
 sorwe for drede of the peyne of helle / [176] And ther-  
 fore seyth Iob to god ¶ Suffere lord that I may a while  
 bewayle / & wepe or I go / wit oute returnyng to the  
 derke lond / keuerred with the derrickenesse of deth / [177]  
 to the lond of mysese & of derkenesse / where as there is the  
 schadewe of deth / where as there is non ordere of  
 ordynauce / but gresely drede that euere schal laste / [178]  
 Lo heere may ȝe seen / that Iob preyede of respit / a while /  
 to bewepe & wayle his trespassis / For certis on day of  
 respit: is betere than al the trespass of this world [179] And  
 for as meche as a man may aquyte hym self byfore god /  
 by penytence in this world & not by tresore / therefore  
 schulde he preye to god to ȝeue hym respit / a while to  
 be-wepe & wayle hise synnys. [180] ffor certis alle  
 the sorwe that a man myȝte make from the begynnyng

of this world. nys but a lyte thyng at regard at the sorwe  
of helle [181] ¶ The cause why that Iob clepith helle  
the lond of derknesse [182] Vndyrstonde that he  
clepith it lond or erthe for it is stabeled / & neuere schal  
fayle /. derk: for he that is in helle schal fayle  
ly3t material /. [183] for certis the derke lygh[t] that schal  
come out of the fyr that euere schal brenne / schal turne  
hem al to peyne that is in helle / for it schewith hym to the  
horrible deuillys / that hym turnementyn / [184] couerid with  
the derkenesse of deth / that is to seyyne / he that is in  
helle: schal haue defaute of the sy3te of god / ffor certis  
the sigh[t]e of god / is the lyf perdurabele / [185] The derke-  
nesse of <sup>1</sup>deth: ben the synys that the wrechede  
hath don. whiche that disturbyn hym to seen the sase  
of god. ryght as the derke cloude / by-twixen vs & the  
sunne [186] ¶ Lond of mysese / by cause that there been  
.iiij. maneris of defautis a-3en .iiij. thyngis / that folk  
of this world han in this present lyf / that is to seyne.  
honouris. delycis. and richessis / [187] ¶ A-geyns honour  
haue þey in helle schame & confusoun / [188] for wel 3e  
wote that men clepyn honour the reuerence that men  
doth to man / but in helle is non honour ne reuerence /  
for certis no more reuerence schal be doon / there to a  
kyng: than to a knawe / [189] for wich god seith by  
the prophete Ieromye / Thilke folk that me dispysyn / schul  
been in dispit. [190] ¶ Honour is ek clepid gret lord-  
schepe / there schal no man seruyn othir but of harm &  
turnement / Honour is ek clepid gret dignetee / & hegh-  
nesse: but in helle schul they ben al fortrodyn with deuyllis /  
[191] As god seyth / the horyble deuyllis schul gon &  
comyn vp on the hondis / of dampnede folk And this  
is for as meche / as the heyere that they were in this present  
lyf. the more schul they been abatyd and defouled in  
helle / [192] ¶ A-geyns the richesse of this world schul  
they han myseyse / of pouerte / & that schal been  
in foure / [193] In defaute of tresore / of whiche

that dauyth seyth. The riche folk that enbrasedyn / & onedyn  
 al here herte / to tresore of this world / schul slepyne in the  
 slepyng of deth And no thyng ne schal they fynde / in  
 here handis of al here tresore / [194] ¶ And more ouyr the  
 mysese of helle schal been in defaute of mete / &  
 drynk / [195] for god seyth thus be Moyses / They schul  
 been wastid / with hungryr And the bryddis of helle schul  
 deuoure hem with bittere deth / And the galle of the  
 Dragoun / schal been here drynk / And the venyn of the  
 dragoun schal ben here morsellys [196] ¶ And ferthere ouyr /  
 here mysese schal been in defaute / of clothyng / for they schul  
 ben nakyd in body as of clotyng saue the fyre in whiche  
 they brenne & othere feltys / [197] And nakede schul  
 they been of soule of alle manere vertuis / whiche that  
 is the clothyng of soule / Where ben thanne the gaye  
 robis / & the softe <sup>1</sup>schetis / & the smale schertis / [198]  
 ¶ Lo what seyth god of hem / bi the Prophete Isaye /  
 that vndyr hem schul be strowede mothis / An here  
 couertouris schul been of wormys / of helle / [199] ¶ And  
 ferthere ouyr / here mysese schal ben in defaute of  
 frendis / for he is nat pore that hath goode frendis /  
 but there ne is no frend / [200] for neythir god ne no  
 cryature schal been here frend / and eueriche of hem  
 schal hatyn othir with dedly hate / [201] the sonys &  
 the douzteryn schul rebellyn a-geyns fadyr & modyr /  
 and kenrede a-geyns kenrede / And chydyn & dispysyn  
 euerich a-geyn othir bothe day & nyght / as god seyth  
 by the prophete Michias / [202] & the lounge childeryn  
 that whilom louedyn / so fleschly eueryche of hem othir  
 woldyn euerich of hem etyn othir / ȝif they myȝte / [203] for  
 how schulde they louyn hem to-gedere in the peyne of helle /  
 whan they hatid euerich of hem othir in the prosperite of  
 this lyf / [204] for troste wel her fleschely loue was dedly hate.  
 as seith the prophete Dauid. Who so that lounge wikkede-  
 nesse he hatyth his soule [205] And ho so hatyth  
 his owene soule / certis he may louyn non othir wiȝt



in no manere [206] And therfore in helle is no solas /  
 ne no frenschepe / but euere the more flesly kenredis  
 that been in helle / the more cursedenesse / the more chyd-  
 yngis / & the more dedly hate there is / amongis hem  
 [207] ¶ And ferthere ouyr / they schul haue defaute of alle  
 manere delycis / for sertis delycis been aftyr the apetitis  
 of the fyue wittis As Sighte . Herynge . Smellynge / Sauour-  
 inge / & touchyng / [208] but in helle here syghte schal ben  
 ful of derknesse / & of smok & therfore ful of  
 terys / And here Herynge ful of waymentyng / & of  
 grochyng of teth as seyth Ihesu Crist . [209] Here nose-  
 therlys schul be ful of stynkyng . ¶ And as seith  
 Isaye the prophete here sauouringe schal been ful of bittere  
 galle / [210] And touchyng of al here body / I-keuerede  
 with fyr / that neuere schāl quenche / & wit wermys  
 that neuere schal deyen . As god seyt by the mouth of  
 Isaye [211] And for as meche / as they schul nat wene /  
 that they may deye for payne / And by here deth fle from  
 payne . / That may they vnderstonde in the word of Iob  
 that seyth . there <sup>1</sup>as is the schadewe of deth / [212] Certis  
 a schadewe hat the liknesse of the thyng of whiche it is  
 schadewid / but shadewe is not the same thyng / of whiche it is  
 shadewe [213] riȝt so faryth the payne of helle / it is  
 lyk deth for the horrible anguysch / And / why for it  
 peynyth hem euere As thow men schulde deye a-non / but  
 certis þey schul not deye / [214] For as seyth seynt  
 Gregory / To wreche caityuys / schal been deth with-oute  
 deth & ende with-outyn ende / & defaute with-oute  
 faylyng / [215] for here deth schal alwey lyuyn / & here  
 ende schal euere more begynne / And here defaute schal nat  
 fayle / [216] And therfore seyth seynt Iohn the  
 Euangelist // They schul folwe deth And they schul  
 not fyndyn hym / And þey schul desyre to deye & deth  
 schal fle from hem / [217] And ek Iob seyth there  
 is non ordere of rewele / [218] And al be it so that god hath  
 creat / alle thyngis in ryȝt ordere & no thyng with-

outyn ordere / but alle thyng be ordeyned / & noum-  
bered but ȝit natheles / þey that been dampned / ben no  
thyng in ordere / ne holdyn non ordere / [219] for the  
erthe ne schal bere hem no freut / [220] For as the prophete  
Dauid seith god schal distroye the freut of the erthe as  
fro hem ne the watyr schal ȝeue hem no moysture / ne  
the ayr no refreschyng / ne fer no lyght [221] ffor as  
seith seynt Basilie / the brennyng of the fuyr of this  
world / schal god ȝeun in helle to hem that been dampnyd /  
[222] but the lyȝt & the clernesse schal be ȝeun in  
heuene / to hise childeryn / righ as the goode men ȝeun  
flesch to here childeryn / & bonys to here houndis / [223]  
And for they schul haue non hope to escape / seyth seynt  
Iob at the laste. there schal horroure And gresely drede  
dwelle / with-outyn ende [224] ¶ Horroure is al wey drede  
of harm / that is to come / And þis drede schal euere dwelle /  
in the hertis of hem that been dampned / & therfore  
han they lore al here hope for .vij causis / [225] ¶ fierst  
for god that seyth / here Iuge schal ben with-oute mercy to  
hem / & they may not plesyn hym / ne none of hise  
halwis / ne they ne may ȝeue no thyng for here raunsum /  
[226] ne they schul<sup>1</sup> [1 haue no vois to speke to hym. Ne thei  
may noght fle fro payne. Ne thei haue no goodnes in  
hem that thei may schewe to delyuer hem fro payne. 208, back]

[227] ¶ And therfore seith Salamon. The wicked man ¶ Salamon.  
dyeth & when he is deed he schalt haue non hope to  
escape fro payne. [228] Who so aschamed is weþ wolde vn-  
derstonde these paynes & bi-thenke hym weþ that he  
hath deseruyd thilk paynes for his synnes. Certis he  
schulde haue more talent to sike & to wepe then for  
to syngen & to pleie. [229] ¶ ffor as seith Salamon ¶ Salamon.  
who so that hadde the science for to knowe the paynes that  
ben establischid & ordeyned for synne he wolde make  
sorow. [230] Thilke science as seith seynt Austyn ¶ Augustinus.  
maketh a man to weymentyn in his herte.

[231] ¶ The fourþe poynt that ought make a man .4. cansa.



haue contricion is the sorowfull remembraunce of the gode that he hath lost to don here in erthe & eke the gode that he hath lorn. [232] ¶ Sothly the gode werkis that he hath loste. either thei ben the gode werkis that he wroght er he felt in to deedly synne. Or ellis the gode werkis that he wroght while he laye in synne. [233] ¶ Sothly the gode werkis that he dide bi-forn that he felt in synne ben alle mortefied & astonyed & dullid bi the ofte synnyng. [234] ¶ That other gode werkis that he wroght whiles he laye in synne thei ben outerly deed as to the lif *perdurable* in heuyn. [235] then thilke gode werkis that ben mortified by ofte synnyng whiche gode werkis he did whiles he was in charite. ne mowen neuyr quyen a-yen with-outyn verrye penytence. [236] ¶ And *per*-of seith god bi the mouthe of EzechieH *pat* is the rightfull man returne a-yen from his rightwisnes & to werke wickednes schaff he lyue [237] nay. for alle the gode werkis that he hap wrozt ne schulen neuyr be in remembraunce for he schaff dye in his synne. [238] And vp on thilke Chapitre seth seynt Gregorye thus. *pat* we schulde vndirstonden this pryncipally. [239] That when we doon deedly synne. hit is for noght than to reherce or drawe in to memorie the gode werkis that we han wroght bi-forne. [240] ffor certis in the werkyng of deedly synne ther is no triste to no good werke *pat* we han doon to-forn. that is to seyne as for to haue ther-by the lif *perdurable* in heuyn [241] [ . . . . . ]  
. . . . .  
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.* ] whan we han contricion. [242] ¶ But sothly the gode werkis that men doon whiles that thei ben in deedly synne. for as meche as thei weryn doon in deedly synne thei may neuyr quyen a-yen. [243] ¶ ffor certis thyng that neuyr had lif may neuyr quyen. ¶ And natheles aH be hit that thei ne a-vaile noght to han the lif *perdurable*. yet a-vailen

¶ Ezechielle .

¶ Gregorius

thei to a-breggen of the peyne of helle or ellis to getyn  
 temperaſt richesſe. [244] Or ellis that god woſt the  
 rather enlumyn & lightne the herte of the ſynfuſt  
 man to han repentaunce [245] & eke thei a-vailen  
 for to vſen a man to doon good werke that the fende  
 haue the laſſe power of his ſoule. [246] ¶ And thus the  
 curteis lord ihesu crist ne woſt that no good werke  
 be loſte. for in ſom what it ſchaſt a-vaile. [247] but for as  
 meche [as] the gode werkis that <sup>1</sup>men doon whiles thei <sup>[1 leaf 209, Harl. 1758.]</sup>  
 ben in good lif ben alle mortefied be ſynne folwyng  
 ¶ And eke ſethyns alle the gode werkis that men doon  
 whiles thei ben in dedly ſynne ben outerly deede  
 as for to haue the lif perdurable. [248] Weſt may that man  
 that no gode werke ne doth. ſyng thilke freſche ſong.  
 Iay tout perdu moun tēps & moun labor. [249] ¶ flor  
 certis ſynne bireuyth a mannys goodneſſe & nature  
 & eke the goodneſſe of grace. [250] ¶ fforſothe  
 the grace of the holy goſt fareth as fyre that may noght  
 ben ydeſt. for fire faileth a-non as hit for-leſith his wirc-  
 yng [. . . . . no gap  
 in the MS.] [251] then leſith the ſynfuſt man the goodnes  
 of glorie. That only is be-hight to good men that labouren  
 & werken [252] weſt may he be ſorye then. that  
 owith aſt his lif to god as long as he lyueth hath lyved &  
 eke as long as he ſchaſt lyue that no goodnes ne hath  
 to paie with his dette<sup>2</sup> <sup>3</sup>to god / to whom he owith al his <sup>[2 Harl. extract ends.]</sup>  
 lyf. [253] for truſte wel he ſchal ȝeue a-countys as ſeyth  
 ſeynt Bernard. of alle the godis that han be ȝeun hym  
 in this preſent lyf and how he hath hem diſpendit  
 [254] not ſo meche that here <sup>4</sup>ſchal not periche & here <sup>[4—4 Rabd out, but ſtill viſible.]</sup>  
 of is heed<sup>4</sup> ne a moment of an oure / ne ſchal not periſſche  
 that he ſchal ȝeue of it a rekenynge. [255]

**T**He fyfte thyng that oughte to meue a man to **V<sup>a</sup>**  
 Contrycioun is remembraunce of the passioun that oure  
 lord ihesu crist sufferede for oure synys / [256] ffor as  
 ſeyth ſey[n]t Bernard / whil that I leue I ſchal han remem-  
 HARL. 1758 AND CAMBRIDGE, p. 597 (6-T. 606) <sup>[3 Camb. leaf 406]</sup>

braunce / of the trauaylis / that oure lord crist sufferede in  
 prechyng [257] his werynesse in trauaylyng / hise tempt-  
 aciounys whan he fastide / Hise longe wakyng whan he  
 preyede / Hise teris whan that he wepte for pete of  
 good peple [258] ¶ the wo & the schame / & the  
 filthe that men seydyn to hym / of the foule spittyng  
 that men spittyn in his face / of the buffetys that men ȝeue  
 hym / of the foule mowis that men ȝeue hym / & of the foule re-  
 preuys that men to hym sede / [259] of the naylys  
 with the whiche he was nayled to the cros / and of al the  
 remenaunt of his passioun / that he sufferede for myne synnys  
 & no thyng for hyse gilt / [260] ¶ And ȝe schul vndyr-  
 stonde / than in manys synne / is euery manere ordere /  
 or ordenaunce turned / vp so down / [261] for it is soth  
 that god & resoun / & sensualyte / & the body of man  
 been ordeyned that euerych of these foure thyngis  
 schulde haue lor[d]schepe ouer that othir [262] As thus /  
 god schulde haue lordschepe ouer resoun / & resoun ouyr  
 sensualite / & sensualite ouyr the body of man  
 [263] ¶ But sothly whan man synnyth / Al this ordere &  
 ordenaunce is turned vpsodoun / [264] And therfore  
 thanne for as meche / as the resoun of man ne wele nouȝt been  
 subiect ne obeysaunt to god that is his lord by ryȝt there-  
 fore leseth it the lo[r]dschepe that it schulde haue ouyr  
 sensualite / & ek ouer the body of man / [265] And  
 why for sensualite rebellyth / thanne a-geyns resoun <sup>1</sup>And  
 by that weye leseth resoun the lordschepe / ouer sensualite /  
 & ouyr the body. [266] for ryȝt as resoun is rebel to  
 god / rygh so is sensualite / rebel to resoun and  
 the body also / [267] And certis this disordenaunce &  
 this rebelloun oure lo[r]d Ihesu crist abouȝte vp-on his  
 precious body / Ful deere And herkenyth in which wise /  
 [268] for as meche / thanne as resoun is rebel to god / ther-  
 fore is man worthi to han sorwe / & to be ded /  
 [269] This sufferede oure lord Ihesu cryst for man Aftyr that  
 he hadde be betrayed of his disciple And distreyned / and



boundyn so that his blod brast out at euery nayl / of hise  
handis as seyth seynt Augustyn [270] ¶ And ferthere ouyr  
for as meche as resoun of man wele / not doute sensu-  
alite whan it may therfore is man worthy / to haue schame.  
And this sufferede oure lord Ihesu cryst for man whan they  
spitte in his visage [271] ¶ And ferthere ouyr / for as  
meche as the caytyf body of man is rebel  
bote to resoun / & to sensualite / therfore is it worthy the  
deth / [272] And this sufferede oure lord Ihesu Crist  
vp-on the cros / where as was no part of his body  
fre / with-oute gret pyne / & bittyr passioun / [273]  
And al this sufferede Ihesu crist that neuere forfetid //  
And therfore resonably may be seyde of Ihesu  
in this manere ¶ To meche am I pynyd for the  
thyngis that I neuere deseruyd / And to meche defouled /  
for schenschepe that man is worthy to haue / [274] And ther-  
fore may the synful man / weel seye / as seyth seynt Bernard /  
acused be the bittyrnesse of myn synne / for whiche there  
muste been suffered so meche bittyrnesse / [275] ffor certis  
after the dyuerce discordaunce / of oure wekedenesse:  
was the pascioun of Ihesu cryst ordeyned / in dyuerse thyngis /  
[276] ¶ As thus /. Certis synful manys soule: is betrayned  
of the deuyll be coueytise of temperel prosperite / &  
skornyd be disseyd whan that he cheseth fleschely delycis / And  
3it is it turmentid by inpacience / of aduersite & be<sup>l</sup>spit  
be seruage & subieccioun of synne / & at the laste it is  
slayn fynally / [277] for his disordenaunce of synful man:  
was Ihesu crist fyrst betrayed / and after that was he bounde  
that cam for to onbynde us of synne & of pyne [278]  
¶ Thanne was he bescorned / that only schulde a ben  
honoured / in alle thyngis [ . . . *no gap in the MS.*] [279]  
¶ Thanne was his visage / that ouzte be desyred  
of alle mankynde / in whiche visage aungellis / desire to  
loke: vileynly be-spit [280] ¶ Thanne was he scorgit  
that no thyng hadde a-gilt / And fynally thanne was he  
Crucified / & slayn / [281] thanne was accompleed / the

word of ysaye ¶ He was woundit for  
 oure mysdedis / & defouldid by oure felonyes [282]  
 ¶ Now sithe that Ihesu crist tok vp on hym self / the  
 peyne of al oure wekkedenesse: Meche ouzte synful  
 man wepyn / & be-waylyn that for hise synnys: goddis sone  
 .vj.<sup>a</sup> of heuene schulde al this peyne endure [283] The .vj.  
 thyng that schulde meue a man to contricioun: is the hope  
 of .iiij. thyngis that is to seyne forȝeuenesse of synne /  
 And the ȝifte of grace weel for to do And the glorie of  
 heuene / with whiche god schal gerdounnyn man / For hise  
 goode dedis / [284] And for as meche as Ihesu crist  
 ȝeuyth vs these ȝiftis of hise largenesse & of his souereyn  
 bountee. therfore is he clepid *Iesus*<sup>1</sup> nazarenus rex  
*iudiorum* [285] Ihesu is to seyne sauour / or sal-  
 uacioun on whom men schul han forȝeuenesse as they schul  
 hope of here synnys / whichiche that is properly saluacioun of  
 synnys [286] And therfore seyde the aungel to Ioseph // Thiow  
 schalt clepe his name Ihesus that schal saue his peple / of here  
 synnys / [287] and here of seyth seynt petir There is  
 non othir name vnder heuene that is ȝeue to ony man /  
 by whiche a man may be sauyd / but only Ihesus. [288]  
 Nazarenus / is as meche for to seyne as flouryschyng in  
 whiche a man schal hope that he that ȝeuyth hym remyssion  
 of synnys schal ȝeue hym ek grace / weel to do ¶ ffor  
 in the <sup>2</sup>flour is hope of freut tyme comyng / And in  
 the forȝeuenesse of synne / hope of grace weel to do [289] I  
 was at the dore of thyn herte seyth Ihesus / & clepede for to  
 entere / he that openyth to me schal haue forȝeuenesse / of  
 synne / [290] I wele entere in to hym be myn grace / And  
 soupe with hym by the goode werkis that he schal doon /  
 whiche werkis been the fode / of which / & he schal soupe  
 with me by the greete Ioye / that I schal ȝeue hym / [291]  
 ¶ Thus man schal hope / for hise werkis of penaunce / that  
 god schal ȝeue hym his regne / as he behetyth hym in his  
 gospel

[<sup>1</sup> MS. Ihe]

[292] NOW schal a man vndyrstonde in which



manere schal ben his contricioun / ¶ I seye that it schal  
 be vnyuersel / & total A man schal be /  
 uerray repentaunt for alle hise synnys / that he hath doon / in  
 delit of his theut for delit is ful parlous / [293] For there  
 ben two maneris of consentynges / . that on of hem is /  
 clepid consentynge of affeccoun / whan a man is moeuyd  
 to do synne / & thanne delytith hym longe for to thynkyn on  
 that synne / [294] & his resoun aperseyuyth it weel / that  
 it is synne ageyns the lawe of god / and ȝit his resoun  
 refreynyth not his foule delit / or talent . thow he se wel  
 apertely that it is synne / & ageyns the reuerence of god . Althow  
 his resoun ne consente not to don that synne in dede :  
 [295] ȝit seyn some doctourys / that swich delyt that  
 dwellith longe / it is ful parlous al be it neuere so lite /  
 [296] And also a man schulde sorwe namely for al  
 that he hath desyred a-geyn the lawe of god / with  
 parfit consentyng of his resoun / for therof is no doute /  
 that it is dedly synne / [ . . . . . [297] . . . .  
 . . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] that it is ferst in manys  
 thouȝt / And aftyr that in his delyt & so forth in to  
 consentynge & in to dede [298] ¶ Wherefore I feere that  
 manye man / ne repentyn hem neuere of sweche thoughtys &  
 delycys / ne neuere schryuyn <sup>1</sup>hem of it / but only of the  
 dede of greete synnys outward / [299] wherefore I seye  
 that sweche wekede thouȝtis & wekkede delitis / been  
 subtyl begylouris of hem that schul been dampned / [300]  
 Moore ouer a man ouȝte to sorwe / for hese wekede  
 wordys / as wel as hise wikkede dedis / For certis  
 the repentaunce of a sengeler synne & not repentaunt for alle  
 hise othere synnys / or ellis repente hym of alle hise  
 othere synnys & not of a senguleer synne may not  
 auayle / [301] for certis god almyȝti is al good &  
 therfore / othyr he forȝeuyth al or ellis ryȝt noght [302]  
 And herof seyth seynt augustyn / . I wot certeynly [303] that  
 god is enemy to euery synnere / & how thanne he  
 that observit on synne / schal he han forȝeuenesse of the

othere synnys: Nay [304] ¶ And ferthere  
ouyr / Contricioun schal been wondyr sorweful And an-  
guyssous / & therfore 3euyth hym god pleyuly his  
mercy / And therfore whan myn soule was angwissous /  
*with-inne* me / I hadde remembraunce of god / that  
myn preyere myzte come to hym [305] ¶ fferthere ouyr /  
Contricioun muste be contynewel / & that man haue stede-  
fast purpos to schryue hym & to amende hym of  
his lyf / [306] For sothly whil contricioun lastith man  
may euere haue hope of for3euenesse / & of this comyth  
hate of synne that distroyeth synne bothe in hym self  
& ek in othere folk / as his power [307] ¶ ffor whiche  
seyth dauid / he that louyn god hatyn wekkedenesse / for  
trustith weel / for to loue god: is for to loue that he louyth /  
& hate that he hatith /

[308] ¶ The laste thyng that we schal vndyrstonde:  
is this / whereof auaylyth contricioun / I seye  
that sumtyme Contricioun delyueret man from synne /  
[309] of whiche that dauid seyth / I seye quod Dauid /  
that is to seyn. I purpose it fermely / to schryue me / And  
thow lord relesedyst myn synne / [310] And rygh so  
as contricioun auaieth nouzt *with-oute* sad purpos of  
schrifte / If man haue oportunyte / rygh so lite worth is  
schrifte <sup>1</sup>or satisfaccioun *with-outyn* contricioun [311] ¶ And  
more ouer Contricioun distroyet the prysoun of helle /  
& makyth week & feble alle the strenthis of the  
deuyllis / and restorith the 3iftys of the holy gost / &  
of alle goode werkys / [312] & it clenseth the soule of  
synne / & delyuerith the soule from the pit of helle /  
& from the cumpayny of the deuyll / & from the seruage  
of synne / & restorith it to alle godis spiritueles &  
to the cumpayny & communioun of holy cherche / [313]  
And ferthere it makith hym that whilhom was  
sone of yre / to be sone of grace / And alle these thyngis  
been prouyd by holy writ [314] ¶ And therfore he that  
wolde settyn his entent to teche thyngis he were ful

wis // ffor sothe he schulde not thanne in al his lyf  
 haue corage to synne / but geue his body & al his herte  
 to the seruyse of Ihesu crist / & therof don hym  
 homage [315] For sothly oure swete lord / Ihesu Crist  
 hath spared vs so debonerly in oure folyis / that 3if he ne  
 hadde pete of manys soule / a sory song' we myghte alle  
 synge /

Explicit prima pars penitencie Et sequitur / secunda  
 pars eiusdem .

[316]

**T**He secunde partie of penytence is Confessioun  
 that is signe of Contricioun / [317] Now schul 3e  
 vndyrstonde / what is Confessioun & whethir  
 it oughte nedis be doon or non And whiche  
 thyngis ben nede to verray Confessioun

[318] ¶ ffyrst schalt thu vnderstonde that Confessioun is  
 verray schewyng of synnys to the prest / [319] this is to  
 seyne verray: for he muste confessyn hym of alle the  
 condiciounnys that belongyn to hese synnys/as ferforth as he  
 can / [320] al muste be seyde / & nothyng excused / ne  
 hid ne forwrappid / & nou3t auaunte the of thynne goode  
 werkys [321] ¶ And ferthere ouyr it is necessarye / to vndyr-  
 stonde whens that synnys sprynge / And how they  
 entere / & whiche they <sup>1</sup>been

[322] ¶ Of the spryngynge of synnys / seyth seynt poul  
 in this wyse / That ry3t as by a man / Synne enterede ferst  
 in to this world / And thour that synne deth / ryght so  
 thilke deth / endtred in alle man that sennen [323]  
 And this man was .adam. by whom synne enterede in to  
 this world / whan he brak the comaundement of god /  
 [324] and therefore he that fyrst was so myghty / that he  
 ne schulde nat a deyed / becam swichon that he muste  
 nedis deyee whedyr he wolde or non / And al his progenye  
 in this world / that in thilke man synnedyn [325] ¶ Loke  
 that in stat of innocence whan Adam & Eue

were makid in paradys / & nothyng haddyn schame  
of here nakedenesse [326] how that the serpent that was  
most wyly of alle othere bestis / that god hadde makyd /  
seide to the woman / why comaunded god to 3ow  
that 3e schulde nat ete of euery tre in paradys / [327] The  
woman answerede / of the freut quod sche of the treis  
in Paradys we fedyn vs But sothly of the freut of the  
tre that is in the myddyl of paradys / god forbad vs  
for to ete / ne nought touche it / lest perauenture we schulde  
deye [328] ¶ The serpent seyde to the woman / Nay  
nay 3e schul not deye / of detht / ffor sothe god wot that  
what day that 3e ete therof / 3oure eyen schul openyn  
& 3e schul been as goddys / knowynge good & harm /  
[329] The woman thane <sup>1</sup>saw þat the tre was godd  
to fedyng & fair to þ<sup>e</sup> eyen & delitable to  
sight Sche tok of the freut & et it &  
3af to hire husbonde & he et / & a-non þ<sup>e</sup> eizen of  
hem bothe openedyn / [330] And whan þat they knewin  
that þei were nakede they sowedin of fegelevis a manere  
of brech to hidyn here membris / [331] There may 3e  
se that dedly synne hath first suggestioun of the  
fend as schewith heere by the Naddre<sup>1</sup> And aftyrward  
the delyt of the flesch as schewith heere by eue / And  
aftyr that consentynge of resoun<sup>1</sup> as schewith heere by  
Adam // [332] For troste weel thow it so weere / that the  
fend temtede .eue. that is to seyne the flesch / & the  
flesch hadde delyt in the beute of the freut / defended /  
3it sertis tyl that resoun that is to seyne adam / con-  
sentede to the etynge of the frut<sup>1</sup> 3it stóod he in the estat  
of Innocence // [333] <sup>2</sup>Of thilke Adam<sup>1</sup> toke we thilke  
synne orygynal / for of hym fleschly<sup>1</sup> descendedede be we alle /  
& engendrede of vyle / & corrupt mateere / [334] And  
whan the soule is put in oure body / righ a-noon is con-  
tract orygynal synne / And that that was ferst but only  
peyne of concupscence / is aftyr-ward bothe peyne &  
synne / [335] & therfore ben we alle born / sonys of

[<sup>1</sup>—<sup>1</sup>In corrector's  
hand, over an  
erasure.]



wrathe / & of dampnacioun / perdurable / 3if it neere baptisme /  
 that we resseyvyn / whiche be-nemyth vs the culpe . but for  
 sothe the pyne dwellith with vs as to temptacioun / whiche  
 peyne hyghte concupiscence / [336] this Concupiscence /  
 whan it is wrongfully disposed / or ordeyned in man / it  
 makyth hym coueyte by coueytise of flesh / flesschely synne  
 be syghte of hise eyen / as to erthely thyngis / And  
 eek coueytise of heynesse / be pryde of herte

[337] ¶ Now as to spekyn of the ferthe coueytise  
 that is Concupiscence / aftyr the lawe of oure membris /  
 that weere laufully I-makede / And be ryghtful Iuge-  
 ment / of good / [338] I seye for as meche / as man is nouȝt  
 obeysaunt / to god that is his lord / therfore is the flesh to  
 hym dysobeysaunt / thorw Concupiscence / <sup>1</sup>whiche is  
 clepid norisschyng of synne & occasioun of synne /  
 [339] Therefore al the while / that a man hath withinne hym  
 the pyne of concupiscence<sup>1</sup> / it is impossible / but he be  
 temptid sumtyme / & meuyd in his flesh to synne /  
 [340] & this thyng may not falle as longe as he leuyth /  
 it may weel waxe feble & fayle be vertew of baptisme /  
 and by the grace of good thorw penytence / [341] but  
 fully schal it neuere quenche / that he schal sum-  
 tyme be meuyd / in hym self but he were al refreyned be  
 seknesse or by malefice of socerye / or colde drynkis  
 [342] ¶ ffor lo what seyth seynt Paul / the flesh coueytith  
 a-ȝen the spyryt / & the spirit ageyn the flesh / they  
 been so contrarye / & so stryuyn that a man may nat  
 alwey don as he wolde [343] ¶ The same Seynt Poule  
 Aftyr his greete / penaunce / in watyr & in lond / in <sup>2</sup>watyr  
 be nyght / & be day in gret peril & in greet pyne  
 In lond in femyn & thirst / & cold & clothis /  
 & onys stooned / almost to the deth [344] ȝit seyde he  
 allas I caytif man / ho schal delyuere me from the prysoun  
 of myn caytyf body / [345] And Seynt Ierom whan he  
 long tyme hadde wonyd / in deserð / whereas he hadde noon  
 cumpaynye / but of wilde bestes / where as he hadde



no mete but erbis / and watir to his drink ne no bed  
 but the nakede erthe / ffor whiche his flesch was blak / as an  
 Ethiopen / for hete & nygh distroyed / for cold / [346]  
 ȝit seyde he / that the brennyng of lecherye / boylede in al  
 his body / [347] wherefore I wot wel sekyrly that they  
 ben disseyuede / that seyn that they ben not temptid in  
 here body [348] witnessse of seynt Iame / the apostelle  
 that seyth / that euery wight is temptid in his owene Con-  
 cupiscence / that is to seine that euery of vs hath mater  
 & occasioun to be temptid / of the norysshyng of synne /  
 that is in his body / [349] And therefore seyth seynt Iohn  
 the ewangelist / ȝif that we seyn that we been with-oute  
 synne we disseyuyn oure seluyn / & treuthe is not in vs

[350] ¶ Now schal thow vndyrstonde / [ . . . . ]  
 how synne wexeþ And encreseth in man ¶ The ferste  
 thyng is thilke noryschyng of synne / of whiche I spak  
 by-fore / thilke fleschely concupiscence / [351] and aftyr  
 that comyth subieccioun / of the deuyll / this is to seyne  
 the deuyllis bely with wheche he blowyth / in man the fer  
 of fleschely concupiscence / [352] And aftyr that a man be-  
 thyntyth hym whethir he wele do or noo the ilke thyng  
 to wheche he is temptid / [353] And thanne if that a  
 man withstonde / & weyue the ferste entisyngis of hise  
 flesch / & of the feend / thanne is it no synne And ȝif  
 so be that he do not so / thanne fleit he a noon / a flaume /  
 of delit / [354] and thanne is it good to be war / & kepe  
 hym weel or ellys he wele / fallyn a noon in to consentyng / of  
 synne / And thanne wele he do it ȝif he may / haue tyme  
 & place / [355] and of this mater seyth Moyses . be  
 the deuyll in this manere <sup>1</sup>The fend seyth I wele  
 chase & pursue the man be wekede sulieccioun /  
 & I wele hente hym be meuyng or steri[n]g of  
 synne / & I wele departe myn preyse or myn prey by de-  
 liberacioun / & myn lust schal be accomplischid / in delit /  
 I wele drawe myn swered / in concentyng / [356] for certis  
 rygh as a swerd / departyth a thyng in to pecis / righ

so consentynge departith god fro man / And thanne  
wele I sleen hym with myn hand / in dede of synne / thus  
seyth þ<sup>e</sup> fend [357] For certis thanne is a man al  
deed / in soule / & thus is synne accomple schid with temp-  
tacioun / bi delyt & be concentynge / & thanne is the  
synne clepid actual

[358] ¶ fforsothe synne is in two manerys / othir  
it is venyal or dedly / synne / Sothly whan man louth  
ony thyng more than Ihesu Crist oure creature: thanne  
is it / dedly synne / And venyal synne / is it / 3if man loue  
Ihesu Crist lesse than hym ouzte / [359] forsothe the  
dede of this venyal synne is wol parlyous / for it amenuset  
the loue that a man schulde haue / to good moore & more  
[360] And therefore 3if a man scharge hym self / with manye  
sweche venyal synnys / certis but 3if so be that he sum-  
tyme dyscharge / hym of hem be schrifte the mowe ful  
lightly / amensyn in hem al the loue that he hath / to Ihesu  
crist / [361] & in this wyse skippith venyal in to dedly  
synne / For certis the more that a man schargyth hys soule  
with venyal synnys: the moore is he enclynynd to  
dedly synne [362] And therefore lete vs not be to necligent  
to discharge vs / of venyal synnys / for the prouerbe seith  
That manye smale makyn a greet [363] ¶ And herkene  
this ensauple / A greet wawe of the se comyth sumtyme  
with so greet a violence / that it drenchith the schip /  
And the same doth sumtyme the smale dropis  
of watir that enteryn thorw a lytil crauas in the  
thurrok & in the botème of the schip If men ben so  
necligent that men ne scharge hem not be tyme /  
[364] And therefore al thow there be a differens be twethe  
these two causys / of dren<sup>h</sup>chyng: algate the schip is  
drenkt [365] ¶ Ryght so faryth it sumtyme / of dedly  
synne / And of noyouse venyal synne / whan they  
multiplie in man / so greetly that theyilke wordely thyngis  
that helouth thorw whiche hesynnyth he synnyth venyally /  
is as greet in his herte / as the loue of god / or moore / [366]

And therefore the loue of euerithyng / that is not be set in god /  
 ne doon principally for godis sake: al thow a man  
 loue it lasse than god / 3it is it venyal synne / [367] And  
 dedly synne / whan the loue of ony thyng / wegheth  
 in the herte of man / as meche as the loue of god or  
 moore / [368] ¶ Dedly synne as [seyth] seynt austyn /  
 is whan a man turnyth his herte from god / whiche that is  
 verray souereyn bounte / that may not schaunge / &  
 3ewith his herte to thyng that may schaunge & flitte  
 [369] & certis / that is euery thyng saue god of heuene  
 for soth is 3if a man 3eue his loue / whiche that  
 he owith al to god / with al his herte / vn-to a creature /  
 certis as meche of his loue as he 3euyth to that ilche  
 creature / so meche he be-reuyth from god / [370] And ther-  
 fore doth he synne / for he that is dettoure to god /  
 3ildyth not al his dette to god / that is to seyne / al the  
 loue of his herte

[371] ¶ Now sithe man vnderstonde / generally whiche  
 is venyal synne thanne is it couenable / to telle specially  
 of synnys whiche that manye a man / paraenture ne  
 demyth hem no synnys & schryuyth hym not of the  
 same synnys / And 3it natheles they been synnys  
 [372] Sothly as these clerkis wryte / this is to seyne  
 that at euery tyme / that man etith or drenkyth moore than  
 suffiseth to the sustenance / of his body in certeyn he doth  
 synne / [373] And ek whan he spekyth more than  
 hym nedith / it is synne ek / whan he herkenyth not<sup>1</sup> be-  
 nygnely to the compleynt of the poore / [374] ek whan  
 he is in hele of body / And wele not faste whan othere folk  
 faste / with-oute cause resonable / eek whan he slepith  
 more than nedith / or whan he comyth be thilke enchesoun  
 to late to cherche / or to <sup>2</sup>othere werkis of charitee / . [375]  
 eek whan he vseth his wif with-outyn souereyn desyr  
 of engenderure to the honour of god / or for the entent  
 to 3ilde his wif the dette of his body / [376] Ek  
 whan he wele not visite the sike or the prisounner / 3if he may /

[<sup>1</sup> not later]

CAMBRIDGE 608 (6-T. 617)

[<sup>2</sup> leaf 411, back]

[382] ¶ Now schal men vndirstonde that al be it so  
that non erthely man / may eschewyn alle venyal synnys: 3it  
may he refreyne hym by the brennyng loue that he  
hath to oure lord / Ihesu crist/ And by preyeris & confessioun  
& othere goode werkys / so that it schal but litil greue /  
[383] For as seith seynt Augustyn / 3if a man loue god  
in swich manere / that al that euere he doth is in the  
loue of god [. . . *no gap in the MS.*] werrayly / for he  
brennyth in the loue of god / [384] loke how meche that  
a drope of watyr / that fallyth in a furney ful of feer  
awaylyth / or greuyth / so meche anyeth a venyal  
synne to a man / that is parfit in the loue of Ihesu  
Crist [. . . . .  
. . . . .  
. . . . .  
. . . . .  
no gap in the MS.] be resseyuynge ek of holy watyr /  
by almesse dede by general confessioun of Confiteor  
at the masse / and at Compelyn / And be blyssynge of  
Besschopis & of Prestis & by othere goode werkys. <sup>1</sup>

CAMBRIDGE 609 (6-T. 618)



[Harl. MS. 1758, leaf 212, back.]

De Superbia et eius dependencijs circumstancijs  
spectantibus

[387]

**N**ow is it bi-houeli thyng to tellen whiche ben dedly synnes. that is to seie. kaitifnesse of synnes alle they renne in colis. But in dyuers maner. Now ben thei clepid kaitifes. ffor as meche as thei ben chief & spryngen of alle other synnes. [388] ¶ Of the rote of these .4. synns. Then is pride the generall rote of alle harmes ¶ ffor of this rote spryngen certeyn branchis. as. Ire. Enuye. Accidie. or slewthe. Auarice or couetise to comyn vndirstondyng. Gloteny & lecherie. [389] And eueryche of these cheef synnes hath his branchis & his twigges as schall be declarid in her chapitres folwyng.

## [Of Pride, and its Twigs.]

[390] ¶ And thogh so be that no man can telle vtterli the nombre of the twigges & of the branchis that cometh of pride. yet wold I schewe a partie of hem as ye schullen vndirstondyn. [391] ¶ Ther is. inobedience. Auauntyng. Iprocrisie. Dispite. Arregaunce. Impudence. Swellyng of herte. Insolence. Elacion. Inpacience. Strif. Contumacie. Presumpcion. Irreuerence. Pertynacie. Veynglorie. And manye another twigge that I can nozt declare. [392] Inobedience is he that disobeieth for dispite to the comaundement of god & to his souereynes & to his gostly ffadir. [393] ¶ Auauntour is he: that bosteth of the harme or of the bounte that he hath done. [394] Ipoecrisie is he that hideth hym to schewe hym suche as he is & schewith hym suche as he is not. [395] ¶ Dispitous is he that hath disdeyn of his neighboris. that is to seyn of his eyn cristen or hath dispite to do that he ought to do. [396] ¶ Arrogaunt is he. that thenketh that he hath thilke bountees in hym that he hath not. Or



weneth that he schulde haue hem be his desertis. Or  
 ellis that he demeth that he be þat he is not. [397] ¶ Im-  
 pudent is he that for his pride hath no schame for his  
 synne. [398] ¶ Swellyng of herte is he that when a man  
 reioiseth hym of harme that he hath doon. [399] ¶ Inso-  
 lent is he that dispiseth in his Iugement alle other  
 folk as to regarde of his value & of his connyng & of  
 his spekyng & of his beryng. [400] Elacion is when  
 that he ne may neither suffre to haue maistrie ne felawe. [401]  
 ¶ Inpacient is he that wott noght ben taught ne vndir-  
 nome of his vices. ¶ And be strife werreieth trouthe wetyngly  
 & defendeth his folye. [402] ¶ Contymax is he that  
 thoroght his indignacion is a-yens eueryche auctorite or  
 power of hem that ben his souereyns. [403] ¶ Pre-  
 sumpcion is he that when a man taketh an emprise that  
 hym ought noght to do. Or ellis he may it noght do. & that  
 is called Surquedrie. ¶ Inreuerence is when men don noght  
 honour ther as hem ought to doon & waiteth to be  
 reuerencid. [404] ¶ Pertynacie is whan a man defendith  
 his folye. & trusteth to mechiht to his owne witte. [405]  
 ¶ Veynglorie is / for to haue<sup>1</sup>] <sup>2</sup>pompe & delit in his  
 temperel heynesse / & gloryfye hym in wordely  
 estatiss [406] ¶ Iangelyng is / whan man spekith to  
 meche be-fore folk / & clappyn as a melle And take no  
 kep what they seye / [Harl. 1758 extract ends]

[407] And 3it is there a preue spice / of pryde that  
 wayth fyrst for to be saluyd: er than he wele salue / al be he  
 lesse worthi than that othir is / paraenture / And ek he  
 waitith or desyrith to sitte / or ellis goon a-boue hym in  
 the weye / or kisse pax / or been ensensed / or goon to  
 offerynge by-fore his neighebore / [408] & sweche semblable  
 thyngis / a-geyns his deute paraenture / but that he hath  
 his herte / & his entent in swich a proud desir to be  
 magnyfied & honoured / by-forn the peple. [Cambr. MS. leaf 413]

[409] ¶ Now be there two manere of pride that  
 on of hem is with inne the herte of a man And that

othir is with oute / [410] of whiche sothtly these for-  
 seyde thyngis & mo than I haue seyde / apertenyn to  
 pryde / that is in the herte of man / And that othere spicis  
 of pryde. been *with-oute* / [411] but neuere the les that on  
 of these spicis / of pride: is sygne of that othir riȝt  
 as the gay ¶ Leuesel at the tauerne: is signe of the wyn /  
 that is in the seler / [412] & this is in manye thyngis /  
 as in speche & cuntenaunce / & in outrageous aray / of  
 clothyng / [413] For certis ȝif there hadde be no synne  
 in clothyng: Crist wolde not sosoone haue notid / & spokyn of  
 the clothyng of the riche man in the gospel [414] &  
 as seyth seynt Gregory / that precious clothyng is cou-  
 pable / for the derthe of it / & for his softenesse / &  
 for his strangenesse & degisynesse / & for the super-  
 fluyte or for the inordinat skarsenesse of it [415]  
 ¶ Allas may man nat seen as in oure dayis the synful  
 costelewe aray of clothyng / & namely in to meche  
 superfleuyte / or ellis in disordenat skarsenesse

[416] ¶ As to the ferste synne in superfleuyte of  
 clothyng / whiche that makith it so deere to harm of the  
 peple / [417] nat only the cost of the enbroudyng /  
 the degyse endentyng / or barryng / owndyng . palyng /  
 wyndyng or bendyng <sup>1</sup>& semblable wast / of clothyng  
 in vanyte / [418] But there is also the costelewe furring in  
 hire gounys / so meche pounsounnyng / of chesellis to make  
 holys / so meche daggyng of scheris / [419] forth-*with* /  
 the superfuite in lenthe / of the forseide gounys / trayl-  
 yng in the dunge / & in the myre / on horse & ek on  
 foote as weel of man as of woman / that al thilke  
 traylyng is verrayly as in effect wastid consumyd thred-  
 bare & rotyn *with* donge / rathere than it is ȝeue to  
 the poore / to greet damage of the forseide poore / folk  
 [420] & that in sundery wise / this is to seyne / that the  
 more the cloth is wastid: the more mote it coste / to  
 the peple for the skarsenesse [421] And ferthere ouyr  
 ȝif so be that they wolde ȝeue swiche pounsonede / &

daggede clothyng to þ<sup>e</sup> pore peple / it is not conuenyent  
 to were for here estat ne sufficient to be to here necescite /  
 to kepe hem from the distemperaunce of the firmament.  
 [422] ¶ Vp-on that othir syde / to speke of the disord-  
 ynat skarsenesse / of clothyng as been these cuttede  
 sloppis or haunseleynys / that thorw here schortnesse  
 keuere not the schameful membris / of man to wekede  
 centent / [423] Allas some of hem schewyn the boce of  
 here schap / & the horyble swollyne membris / that semyth  
 lyk the maladie of hirnya in the wrappyng of here hosyn /  
 [424] And ek the buttokis of hem / farn as thow it were  
 the h[y]ndere part of a sche Ape in the fulle of the moone  
 [425] And moore ouyr the wrechede swollene membris /  
 that they schewe thorw disgisyng in departyng of  
 here hosyn / in whit & red / semyth that half here schame-  
 ful preue menbris were flayn / [426] & ȝif so be that  
 they departyn here hosyn in othere colouris / as is whit  
 & blew / or with whit & blak / or blak & reed and so  
 forth / [427] thanne semyth it as be variauns of colourys  
 that half here preue membris been corupt  
 by the fier of seynt Antonye / or by cankre <sup>1</sup>or othir  
 swich myschaunce [428] ¶ Of the hyndere part of here  
 buttokys it is ful horryble for to se / for certis in that  
 partye of here body / there as they porgyn here styngyng  
 ordure / [429] that foule partie schewe they to the peple /  
 proudly in dispit / of honeste / which honeste that  
 Ihesu crist & hise frendis obserued to schewyn in here  
 lyue [430] ¶ Now as of the outrageous aray of wemen /  
 god wot that thogh the visage of some of hem seme  
 ful chast & debonayre / ȝit notyfie they in here aray or  
 atyr / likerousnesse & pride / [431] I sey not that  
 honeste in clothyng of man or woman is oncon-  
 able / But certis the superfluite / or disordenat skantite  
 of clothyng / is repreuable / [432] Also the synne of  
 ornament or of apparayle / is in thyngis that apperteignyn  
 to rydyng / As in to manye delicate horsis that been holdyn

for delit that been so fayre fatte & costlewe / [433]  
 & also in manye a vicious knaue / that is susteynyd by  
 cause of hem. In to coryous harneys / as in sadelis  
 croperis / peitreliis / & brydelys kouered with precious  
 clothyng & riche barris & platis of gold / and of  
 syluyr [434] ¶ For whiche god seith be zacharie the  
 prophete. I wel confounde / the rideris of sweche hors /  
 [435] These folk take lytil reward of the rydyng of  
 goddis sone / of heuene / & of his harneis whan he rod /  
 vp-on the asse / And ne hadde non othir harneys but  
 the poore clothis of hise disciplis / ne we ne reede not  
 that euere he rod / on othir beste [436] I speke this  
 for the synne of superfluyte / & not for resonable  
 honeste whan resoun it requyreth [437] ¶ And ferther  
 ouyr/certis pryde is gretly notified/in holdyng of greet meyne/  
 whan they been of lytil profit or of ryȝt no profit /  
 [438] & namely whan that meyne is felonous / & damage-  
 ous to the peple / by hardynesse of greet lordschepe / or by  
 weye of offys [439] ¶ For certis sweche lordis / selle  
 thanne here lordschepe / to the deuyil of helle / whan they  
 susteyne the wikkedenesse of here meyne [440] ¶ Or ellis  
 whanne these folk of lowede degre / as thilke that holdyn  
 ostelryis / suste<sup>ne</sup> the theffte of here hostelleris /  
 & that is in manye manere / of disseytis /  
 [441] thilke manere of folk been the flyis / that folwyn  
 the hony or ellis the houndis that folwyn the carayn / sweche  
 manere of folk folwyn strangelyn spiritually here lordschepis /  
 [442] for whiche thus seyth dauid the prophete ¶ Wikkede  
 deth mote come to sweche lordschepis / And god ȝeue that  
 they mote discendyn in to helle al doun / for in herere  
 housis been inyquiteis / & schrewedenessis / & noght god  
 of heuene / [443] & certys til dey doon a-mende-  
 ment / ryȝt as god ȝaf his benysoun to Pharaon / bi the  
 seruyse of Iacob / & to laban bithe the seruyse of Ioseph:  
 so god wele ȝeue his malysoun to sweche lordschepis  
 that sustene the wikkedenesse of here seruauantis / but they



come to a-mendement [444] ¶ Pryde of the table apperyth  
ek ful ofte / For certis riche men been clepid to festis /  
& poore folk been put a-wey & rebukid [445] And also  
in exces of diuerse metis & drynkis & namely  
sweche manere bake metis / & dischemetis brynynge with  
wildefeer / peynted & castellid with paper / &  
semblable wast / so that it is abisioun for to thynke / [446]  
& ek in to gret preciousnesse of vessel & coryousto  
of menstralsie by whiche a man is sterid the moore to  
delyeis / of lecherye / [447] ; if it so be that he sette the lesse his  
herte vp-on oure lord Ihesu crist / certeynly it is a  
synne . & certeynly the deuyllis myght is so greet  
in this cas / that a man myghte lighteli by hem falle in to  
a dedly synne . [448] The especes that souredyn of pryde /  
sothly whan they sourdyn of maleis ymagyned auysed  
& forcast or ellis of vsage by dedly synne / it is  
no doute / [449] & whanne they souredyn bi frelte on-  
auysed / sodeynly / & sodeynly withdrawen a-geyn alle been  
they greuous / synnys / I gesse that they been nat  
dedly [450] ¶ Now myghte men aske wherof Pride  
souredith & spryngit / And I seye that it spryngith  
sumtyme of the goodis of nature / And sumtyme of  
the goodis of fortune / And sumtyme of the goodis of  
grace / [451] Certis the goodis of nature <sup>1</sup>stondyn  
outirly in goodis of body or goodis of soule [452]  
Certis goodis of body : been hele of body /  
strenthe delyuynnesse / Beute genterye / Fraunchise /  
[453] Goodis of nature of the soule : been good wit /  
scharp vndirstondynge / subtil engyn / uertu naturel / good  
memorye / [454] Goodis of fortune been rychessis  
hei degreis of lordschepes / preysynge of the peple / [455]  
Goodis of grace been science / power to suffere  
spirituel trauayle / benygnetee vertuous contemplacioun /  
withstondynge of temptacioun / & semblable thyngis /  
[456] of whiche forseide goodis / certis it is a ful greet  
folye / a man to prydyn hym in onye of hem / alle [457]



¶ Now as for to spekyn of goodis of nature god wot that  
 sumtyme we han hem in nature / as meche to oure  
 damage as to oure *prophit* / [458] As for to spekyn of  
 hele of body: certis it passith ful lyghtely / & ek it  
 is ful oftyn enchesyn of the seknesse of oure soule / ffor  
 god wot that the flesch is a wel greet enemy to the soule /  
 And therefore the more that the body is hol the moore  
 be we in *peril* to falle [459] ¶ Ek for to *pride* hym in  
 his strenthe / of body: it is an high folye ffor certis  
 the flesch / coueythith a-geyns the spirit And ay the moore  
 strong that the flesch is / the soryere may the soule be  
 [460] And ouyral this strenthe of body / & wordily  
 hardynesse / causeth ful ofte manye a man to *peril* &  
*myschaunce* [461] ¶ Ek for to *pryde* hym of his  
 genterye / is wol greet folye for ofte tyme the gentrye of the  
 body / benymyth the gentrie of the soule / And ek we  
 been alle of oon / *fadyr* / & of on *modir* / & alle we been  
 of on *mater* rotyn & corrupt / bothe *riche* & *poore* /  
 [462] Forsothe on manere genterye is for to *preyse* /  
 that aparylyth manys corage / with *vertuys* & *moraliteis* /  
 & makith hym *cristis* child / [463] ffor truste weel that  
 ovir what man that synne hath maystrye he is a verray  
 cherl to synne

[464] ¶ Now been there general signys of gentilessis /  
 as *eschuyng* of *vicis* / and *ribaude* & *seruage* of  
 synne in word <sup>1</sup>in werk & *contenaunce* [465] &  
*vsinge* *vertu* *curtaysie* & *clennesse* & to be  
*liberel* / that is to seyne large be mesur for thilke that  
 passith mesur: is folye & synne / [466] A nothir is  
 to remembre hym of bounte / that he of othere folk hath  
*resseyued* / [467] A nothir is to be buxsome to hese  
*sogottis* / wherof seith Senec / there is no thyng moore  
 conabele to a man of hey estat / than *debonayrete*  
 & *pete* / [468] And therefore these flies that men  
 clepe *beis* / Whan they make here kyng: they chese  
 on that hath no prikke wherwith he may styng // [469]

A nothir is a man to haue a noble herte / & a diligent  
 to atteyne to here vertuous thyngis [470] ¶ Now certis  
 a man to pride hym in the goodis of grace / is ek an  
 outragious folye for thilke 3iftis of grace / that schulde  
 a turnyd hym to goodnesse / And to medicyne turnyth  
 hym to venym and to confusioun as seith seynt gregory //  
 [471] Certis also ho so prydith hym in the goodis of  
 ffortune: he is a ful greet fol / for sumtime is a man a ry3t  
 greet lord be the morwyn / that is a caytif & a wreche  
 er it be euyñ [472] And sumtyme the richesse of a man:  
 is cause of his deth Sumtyme the delieis of a man: is  
 cause of the greuouse seknesse thour whiche he deyeth /  
 [473] Certis the comendacioun of the peple / is sum-  
 tyme ful fals & ful brethil for to triste / this day they  
 preise / to morwe they blame. [474] god wot desir to  
 haue commendacioun of the peple hath caused deth to  
 manye a besi man [475] ¶ Now sithe that so is / that 3e han  
 vndirstonde what is pride / & whiche been the spicis of  
 it / And whens pride sordith & spryngith /

*Remedium contra peccatum Superbie (in the  
 margin).*

[476] Now schul 3e vndirstonde whyche is the remedye a-  
 gens pride ¶ Humylite or [. . . . no gap in the MS.]  
 meknesse / [477] is the remedye Ageyns Pride / that is vertu  
 thorw whiche a man hat verray knowelechyng of hym self. &  
 heldith of hym self no prys ne deynte / as in regard of hise de-  
 sertys / considerynge euere his frelte [478] ¶ Now be there thre  
 maneris of humilitee. as humylite in herte / And othir  
 humylite in his mouth. the thredde in hise werkis /  
 [479] The humilite in herte: is in foure maneris / that  
 on is whan a man holdyth hym <sup>1</sup>self as nygh wroth  
 bi-fore god of heuene / A nothir is whan he dispiseth

non othir man / [480] The thredde is whan he ne  
rekke nat thow men holde hym not worth / the  
ferthe is whan he ne is not sory of his humyliacioun / [481]  
Also the humylite of mouth: is in iiij. thyngis / in  
a-tempre speche / And in humylite of speche / And  
whan he knowith with his owene mouth that he is  
swich as he thynkith that he is / in his herte / Anothir  
is whan he preyseth the bounte of a nother man / and  
no thyng therof amenuseth / [482] Humylite ek in  
werk / is in .iiij. manerys / The fyrste is whan he puttyth  
othere men bi-foryn hym / the secunde is to chese the  
loweste place oueral / The thredde is. gladly to assente  
to good conseyll / [483] The forte is to stonde gladly to  
the award / of hise souereynys or of hym that is in heyere  
degree /. Certeyn this is an greet degree of humylite.

(Below are two painted figures: one "Inuidia", a man in a green dress, riding a clawed feline animal (? a wolf) biting a bone; the other, "Charite", a woman with a 3-crowned mitre on her head, carrying a winged and flaming (or bleeding) heart in her left hand, a staff in her right. See the Society's Chaucer Autotypes, Part 2.)

[484]

**A**

tyr pride wele I speke of the foule synne of enuye /  
whiche that is as by the word of the philysofere  
Sorwe of othere menys prosperite // And after the  
word of seynt Augustyn / it is sorwe of othere manys  
wele / And the Ioye of othere menys harm // [485]  
This foule synne is platly a-geyns the holy gost /  
[. . . . . no gap in the MS.] 3it natheles  
for as meche / as bountee. pertenyth properly to the  
holy gost / & enuye comyth propyrlly of maleys / ther-  
fore it is propirly a-geyn the bounte of the holy gost //  
[486] Now hath Maleys .ij. spicis that is to seyne  
hardynesse / of herte in wekedenesse or ellis the flesch of  
man is so blynd that he considerith not that he is in  
synne / or rekkith not that he is in synne whiche  
is the hardynesse of the deuyl [487] That othir  
spice of enuye / is whan that a man werreyeth trouthe  
whan that he wot that it is trouthe / & ek whan  
he werreyeth the grace that god hath 3oue to his

And al this is by enuye // [488] Certis  
thane is enuye the werste synne that is / For sothly  
alle othere synnys / been sumtyme onli a-geyns on special  
vertu / [489] But certis enuye / is a-geyns alle othere wertuis  
a-geyns alle goodnesse / for it is sory of alle the  
bounteis / of his neghebour And in this manere / it is  
dyuerse from alle othere synnys [490] For weel onethe  
is there ony synne / that it ne hath sum delit in it self /  
saue only enuye / that euere hat in it self / Angwissch &  
sorwe // [491] The spicis of enuye ben these / there is  
ferst sorwe of othere menys goodnesse / & of his prosperite  
/ & prosperite is kyndeli mater of ioye /  
Thanne is enuye a synne a-geyns kynde / [492] The  
secunde spice of enuye / is Ioye of othere menys harm /  
& that is proprely lyk to the deuyl that euere reioyeth  
hym of othere manys harm [493] ¶ Of these two spycys /  
comyth bakbytynge And this synne of bakbitynge / or detractyoun  
hath serteyn spicis / as thus sum man preyseth his  
neighebour by a wekede entent [494] For he makyth  
alwey a wekkede knotte / at the laste ende [ . . . .  
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] that is digne of moore  
blame / than worth <sup>1</sup>is al the preysynge / [495] The secunde  
spice is that ȝif a man be goode / & doth or seyth a  
thyng to good entent / the bakbitere wele turne al thilke  
goodnesse vp so doun / to hise schrewede entent / [496]  
The iij is to amenuse the bounte / of his neighe-  
boure / [497] The ferthe spice of bakbytynge is this  
that ȝif men speke goodnesse of a man / thanne wele the  
bakbitere seyn / Parfey ȝit swich a man is bet than he /  
in dispreysynge of hym that men preyse / [498] The  
fifte spice is this / for to concente gladly & herkene  
gladly to the harm that men speke of othere folk this  
synne is ful gret / And ay encreseth aftyr the wekkede  
entent / of the bakbytere [499] ¶ Aftyr bakbytynge comyth  
grochyng / or murmuracioun & sumtyme it sp[r]yngith  
of inpacience / a-geyns god & sumtyme a-geyns man /



[500] A-geyns god it is whan a man / grochith ageyns  
the peyne of helle / or ageyns pouerte / or los of catel  
or a-geyns reyn or tempest or ellis grochyn that schrewis  
han prosperite or ellis that goode men han ad-  
uersite / [501] And alle these thyngis schulde men suffere /  
patiently / for they come by the ryghful Iugement / &  
ordenaunce of god / [502] Sumtyme comyth grochyng of  
aueryce As Iudas grochede a-geyns the Magdelyne / whanne  
sche a-noynted the heued of Cryst with here  
precious onyment / [503] this maner murmur is swich  
as whan man grochith of goodnesse that hym self  
doth / or that othere folk doon of here owene catel / [504]  
Sumtyme comyth murmur of pryde / as whan Symon  
the pharyse grochede a-geyns the Magdalyn whanne  
sche aprochede / to Ihesu Crist / & wepte at his feet / for hire  
synnys [505] And sumtyme it sordyth of  
enuye / whan men discoueryn a manys herm / that was  
preue / or beryth hym on hande thyng that is fals [506]  
¶ Murmure ek is ofte a-mongis seruauantis / that grochyn  
whan here souereynys biddyn hem don lefful thyng  
[507] & for as meche as they dar not opynly with seye  
the comaundementis of here souereynys / 3it wele seyn  
<sup>1</sup>seyn harm & groche & murmure pryuyli for verray  
despit / [508] whiche wordis men clepe the deuyllis  
pater noster thow so be that the deuyl hadde  
neuere no pater noster but that lewede folk 3eue it swich  
a name [509] ¶ Sumtyme it comyth of yre or  
prive hate / that norschith rancour in herte / as aftyward  
I schal declare [510] ¶ Thanne comyth ek bittirnesse / of  
herte / thorw whiche bittirnesse euery good dede of his  
neighebour semyth to hym bittyr & onsaury [511]  
¶ Thanne comyth discord that vnbyndith alle manere  
of frenchepe / Thanne comyth scornynge as whanne a  
man sekyth occasioun to anoyen his neighe-  
bour / al do he neuere so weel [512] ¶ Thanne comyth  
accusyng / As whan a man sekyth occasioun to anoyen his



neihebour whiche that is lik the craft of the deuyl  
that wayth bothe nyght & day to acusyn vs alle  
[513] ¶ Thanne comyth malignete / thour whiche a man  
noyeth his neighebour / priuily 3if he may / [514] & If he  
not ne may algate his wilke wil schal not fayle /  
as for to brenne his hous pryuyly . or enpoysoune or sle  
these bestis or semblable thyngis

[1—] Ouer an erasure in  
the corrector's hand.]

[In the margin :] **Remedium contra Inuidiam.**  
[515] **N**ow wele I speke of the<sup>1</sup> remedye a-geyns this foule  
synne of enuye ffyrst is the loue of god  
principal & louynge of his neghebour as hym self ¶ ffor  
sothly that on ne may not been with-outyn that othir /  
[516] And troste weell that in the name of thy name / of thyn  
neghebour: thow schalt vndyrstonde the name of thyn  
brothir / for certis we han on fadyr fleschely / & on  
modyr ¶ That is to seyne Adam . & Eue . & ek on fadir  
spirituel / that is god of heuene [517] ¶ Thi  
neighebores art thow holde for to loue & willyn hym alle  
goodnesse / And therfore seith god loue thin neghebores / as  
thyn self / that is to seynne to saluacioun bothe of lyf &  
soule [518] ¶ And more ouer thow schat loue hym in  
word / & in benygne amonestyng & schastysyng /  
& conforte hym in hise anoyis ¶ And preye for hym with  
al thyn herte [519] ¶ And in dede thow schat loue hym  
in swich wyse / that thow schat doon to hym in charite:  
as thow woldist that it were doon to thyn owene persone /  
[520] & therfore thow<sup>2</sup> [3]schalt not doon hym no damage  
in wicked worde ne harme in his bodie ne in his cateh  
ne in his soule bi entisyng of wicked ensample. [521]  
Thou schalt not desiren his wif non of his thynges .  
Vndirstonde eke that in the name of thi neighbore is com-  
prehendid his enemye. [522] ¶ Certis a man schalt loue  
his Enemye for the comaundementis of god . & sopli thi  
frende schalt thou loue in god. [523] I seie thyn  
Enemye schalt pou loue for goddis sake bi his comaunde-

[2 leaf 418 is cut  
out of the Camb  
MS.]

[3 Harl. 1758, on  
leaf 215, back,  
fills in.]

ment. ffor if it were reson þat man schulde hate his  
 Enemye. forsothe god schulde not take vs to his loue:  
 that ben his Enemyes [524] a-yens thre maner of  
 wrongis that his Enemye doth to hym. he schaff do thre  
 thynges. as þus. [525] ¶ A-yens hate & rancour of herte.  
 he schaff loue hym in herte. Ayen chidyng & wicked  
 wordis he schaff praie for his Enemye ¶ Ayens the wicked  
 dede of his Enemye he schaff doon hym bounte. [526] ffor  
 crist seith. Loueth your Enemyes & preieth for hem  
 that speke you harme. And eke for hem that you chacen  
 & pursewyn & doth bounte to hem that you haten.  
 Lo thus commaundeth vs our lord ihesu crist to do  
 to our Enemyes. [527] ¶ ffor sothli nature dryueth vs  
 to loue our frendis. And parfaie our Enemyes han  
 more nede to love then our frendis. And thei that  
 muste nede haue. certis to hem schaff men do good-  
 nes. [528] & certis in thilke dede haue remem-  
 braunce of the loue of ihesu crist that died for his  
 Enemyes. [529] ¶ And in as meche as thilke loue is the  
 more greuous to parfourme. so meche is more  
 gret the merite. & therfore the louyng of our  
 Enemye hath confoundid the venyme of the deuyß  
 [530] ffor as the deuyß is discomfited be humylite.  
 Right so is he woundid to the deth bi the loue of our  
 Enemye. [531] Certis then is loue the medecyne that  
 caccheth out the venyme of Enuye fro mannes hert. [532]  
 The spices of this pas schuff ben more largeli in her  
 chapiters folwing /

¶ De Ira [*from margin*]

[533]

**A**fter Enuye woß I declare the synne of Ire. ffor  
 sothli who that hath Enuye vp on his neighbore.  
 a-non comenli he woß fynde hym mater of  
 wrapthe in worde or in dede a-yens hym <sup>1</sup>to whom  
 he hath Enuye. [534] ¶ And as weß cometh Ire of

[<sup>1</sup> leaf 216, Harl.  
MS. 1758]

Pride as of Enuye. ffor sothli he that. is proude or Enuyous is lightli wroth.

[535] This synne of Ire aftir the discryuyng of seynt Austyn. is wicked wille to ben a-vengid bi word or bi dede [536] ¶ Ire aftir this Philosophie. is ¶ *Philosophus* the feruent blood of man quyked in his herte thorogh whiche he woß harme to hym that he hitteth. [537] ¶ ffor certis the herte of man bi enchaüfyng & meuyng of his blood wexith so trouble that he is oute of all Iugement of reson. [538] But ye schullen vndirstonde that Ire is in two maneres. That oon of hem is good & that other is wicked. [539] ¶ The good Ire is bi ielousie of goodnes thorogh the whiche a<sup>2</sup>] <sup>3</sup>man is wroth [<sup>¶ Harl. MS. 1758 ends.] with wikkenessee & ageyn wekkedenesse And therefore seyth a wis man that Ire is bet than pley / [540] this ire is with debonoyrete & it is wroth withoute bittyrnesse / not wroth ageyns the man: but wroth with the mysdede of man As seyth the prophete dauid. Irascimini et nolite peccare. [541] Now vndirstondith that wekede yre is in two manerys that is to seyne sodeyn yre / or hastif Ire with-outyn a-visement & consentynye of resoun / [542] The menyng & the sens of this / is that the resoun of a man / ne consente not to thilke sodeyn yre / & tharne is it venyal [543] ¶ Anothir yre is / ful wekkede that comyth of felonye of herte auysed & cast be-forn wit wikkede wil to don vengeance / & therto his resoun consentith and sothly this is dedly synne / [544] this yre is so displeaunt to god that it distorbelyth his hous / & chaseth the holy gost out of manys soule / & wastyth & distroieth the liknesse of god. that is to seyne the vertu that is in manys soule / [545] & put in hym the lyknesse of the deuyll / & be-nemyth the man from god that is his ryghtful lord [546] this ire is a ful greet plesaunce to the deuyll for it is the deuyllis furneys that is eschafid / with the fyr of helle / [547] for certis</sup>

ryȝt so as fyr is moore myȝty to distroye ertheli  
 thyngis / than ony othir elemen / ryȝt so Ire is myty to  
 distroye alle spirituel thyngis / [548] loke ho that  
 fuyr of smale gledys that been almost dede vnder aschyn  
 welyn quekyn a-geyn whan they been touchede / with  
 brynston / right so Ire wele eueremore quekyn a-geyn /  
 Whan it is touchid by the pryde that is couered in  
 manys herte [549] for certis fyr ne may not come  
 out of no thyng but if it were fyrst in the seme thyng  
 naturelly as fyr is drawyn out of flyntys with styl.  
 [550] And ryght so as pryde is manye tyme matire of yre  
 righ so is rancure noryce & kepere of Ire // [551] There is  
 a manere<sup>1</sup> of tree as seith seynt Isydre that whan men  
 make fyr of the ilke tre & kouere the colis with  
 aschyn / sothly the feer of it wil lastyn ale a ȝeere or more /  
 [552] And riȝt so farith it of rancure / what it is  
 coueryd in the hertis of summe men certeyn it wele  
 laste perauenture / from oon Esterne day On tyl a nothir  
 esterne day / & moore / [553] but certis thilke man  
 is ful fer from the mercy of god al thilke while.

[554] In this forseide deuyllis furneyns / there  
 forgyn iij schrewis / Pryde that ay blowyth & encreasith  
 the feer by chydyng & welkede wordis / [555] thanne  
 stondith Enuye And holdyth the hoothe yryn in the fyr vp-on  
 the herte of man / with a peyre of longe tongis of long rancur  
 [556] And thanne stant the synne of contumelye or  
 stryf & cheest & baterith & forgith by vileyns  
 repreuyngis [557] Certis this cursed synne a-noyeth  
 bothe to the man hym self & ek to his neighebores /  
 for sothly almost al the harm that ony man  
 doth to his neighebores comyth of wrathe / [558] ffor  
 certis outrageous wratha doth al that euere the  
 deuyll comaundyth hym / For he ne sparith nothyr  
 crist ne his swete modyr / [559] & in his out-  
 ragious angir / & Ire Allas ful manyon /  
 that tyme felyth in his herte / ful wikkedely



bothe of cryst & of hise seyntis / & ek of alle hise halwys.  
 [560] Is nat this a cursed vse. 3is certis allas it be-nemyth  
 from man his wit & his resoun / & al his debonayre  
 lyf spirituel that schulde kepe his soule // [561]  
 Certis it be-nemyth ek goddis due lordschepe. &  
 that is mannys soule / & the loue of hise neigheboris //  
 It stryuyth ek alday ageyn trouthe / it reuyt hym the  
 quyete of his herte & subuertith his soule.

[562] Of Ire comith these stynkende gendruris  
 Fyrst hate that is old wrathe / Discord thurh whyche  
 a man for-sakith his olde frend / that he hath louyd ful  
 longe / [563] And thanne comyth werre & euery  
 maneere of wrong that man doth to his neghebour in  
 body or in catel. // [564] Of this cursede synne of Ire  
 comyth ek manslaughtre / And vndirstonde weel that  
 homycide that is manslaughtre is in dyuerse thyngis. *sum*  
 manere of homycide is spirituel. & *sum* is <sup>1</sup>bodyly. [565]  
 Spirituel manslaughtre: is in .vj. thyngis. Fyrst bi  
 hate as seyth seynt Iohn that he that hatith his brothyr  
 is homycide [566] homycide is ek bi bakbitynge of  
 whiche bakbiteris seyth Salomon that they han two  
 swardis / with whiche they sleen heere neigheborys / for-  
 sothe as wikke is it to be-neme hym his goode name / as  
 his lyf. [567] Homycide is ek in 3euyng of wikkede  
 conseyll be fraude / As for to 3eue conseyll to areyse  
 wrongful customys / & talagis [568] of whiche seith Salo-  
 mon / Leoun rorynge & Bere hungry: been lik to the crewel  
 lordschepis in whiche lordschepis holdyng or abregyng of the  
 schepe or the heere of the wagis of seruautis / or ellis in  
 vsure or in withdrawyng of the almesse of poore folk /  
 [569] ffor whiche the wyse man seyth ffedith hym that  
 almost deyeth for hungir. ffor sotly but 3if thow feede hym  
 thow slest hym. And alle these been dedly synnys / [570]  
 Bodily manslau3tere is this / whan thow slest hym with thyn  
 tunge. In othere manere: as whan thow comaundist to  
 sleen a man / or ellis 3euyst hym conseyll to sleen a



man. // [571] Manslaughtre in deede is in foure maneris /  
that oon is by laue ryght as a Iustise dampnyth  
hym that is coupable to the deth. but let the Iustise  
been war that he do it ryghtfully & that he do it not  
for delit to spille blood / But for kepyng of ryghtwis-  
nesse [572] Anothir homycide is doon for  
necessite / as whan a man sleth a nothir / in his defendaunt /  
And that he ne may non othirwise askape [. . . . .  
. . . . . [573] . . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] with-  
oute slauȝtere of his aduersarye / [. . . *no gap in the MS.*]  
he doth synne & he schal bere penaunce as for dedly  
synne // [574] Ek ȝif a man be cas or aventure schete  
an arwe or caste a stoon with whiche he sleth a man  
he is homycide. [575] Ek ȝif a woman by neklygence  
ouyrlye hire child in hire slepyng it is homycide / &  
dedly synne / [576] Ek whan man disturblith con-  
cepcioun of a child & makith a woman outhir barayn  
be drynkyng of venenouse erbis / thorw whiche sche may  
not conseyue / or sleth a child be drynkis / or  
ellis putty[t]h certey[n] material thyngis / in here secre  
placys to slen the child [577] or ellis doth onkyndely  
synne by whiche man <sup>1</sup>or woman sleth here nature  
in manere or in place there as a child may not ben con-  
seyuyd / Or ellis ȝif a woman hath conseyuyd & hurt  
hire self & sleth the child ȝit is it homycyde  
[578] What seye we ek of women that morderyn  
here childeryn for dreed of wordely schame certis an  
horrible homycide / [579] omicide is ek ȝif a man ap-  
rocheth to a woman by desir of lecherye thorw whiche the  
child is perschid / or ellis smythitt a woman wetyngely  
thour wheche sche sleth hire child / Alle these been homy-  
cidis / & horrible dedly synnys / [580] ȝit comyth there of  
Ire manye mo synnys / as weel in word as in thought &  
in dede as he that arrettith vp-on god / or blamyth god  
of thyng of whiche he is hym self gilty. or dispiseth  
god / & alle hise halwys As doon these cursede hasardourys

in dyuerse cuntreis / [581] this cursede synne doon they /  
 whan they felyn in here herte / ful wekkedely of god &  
 of hise halwys. // [582] Also whan thei tretyn onreuerently  
 the sacrement of the auteer / thilke synne is so gret  
 that vnnethe may it be relesid / but that the mercy of  
 god passith alle hise werkys / it is so greet / & he so  
 benyngne [583] Than comyth of yre an attery angir /  
 whan a man is scharly amonestid in his schryfte to for-  
 lete synne / [584] Thanne wele he been angry / &  
 answeryn hokyrly / and angryly or defende or excuse  
 his synne / by onstedfastnesse of his flesch / or ellis he  
 dede it for to holde cumpany with hise felawys / or  
 ellis he seyde the feend entisede hym / [585] or ellis he  
 dede it for his 3outhen. or ellis his complexioun is so  
 coragious that he may not forbere / or ellis it is his  
 destenye as he seyth in to a certeyn age / or ellis he  
 seith it comyth hym of gentyllesse of hise Auncestris  
 And semblable thyngis // [586] Alle thesse manere of folk  
 so wrappyn hem in here synnys / that they ne welen not  
 delyuere hemself // ffor sothly no wigh that excuseth  
 hym wilfully of his synne: may not be delyuered of his  
 synne til that he mekely beknowith his synne [587]  
 After this <sup>1</sup>thanne comyth swerynge that is expres  
 a-geyn the comaundement of god / And this be-fallith ofte  
 of Angir & of yre. [588] God seyth thow schat not  
 take the name of thyn lord god in veyn / or in Idil. Also  
 oure lord Ihesu crist seyth by the word of seynt Mathew /  
 [. . . . . no gap in the MS.] [589] Ne wil 3e  
 not swere in alle maner nothir be  
 heuene: for it is godis trone. ne be erthe for it is the  
 bench of his feet / Ne be Ierusalem for it is the cyte of  
 a greet kyng / ne be thyn heed for thow ne canst not  
 make an heer nothir whit ne blak [590] But seyth be 3oure  
 word .3e. 3e. &. nay. nay. And what that is moore  
 it is of euyl / thus seith Crist / [591] ffor Cristis sake sweryth  
 nat so synfully in dismembrynge of crist by his soule.

herte. bonys. & body. for certis it semyth that 3e  
 thynke that cursede Iewis / ne dismembredyn not  
 I-nough the preciouise persone of crist / but 3e dismembryn  
 hym moore / [592] And 3if so be / that the lawe com-  
 pelle 3ow / to swere thanne rewelyth 3ow aftyr the lawe of  
 god / in 3oure swerynge as seyth Ieromye .4°. c°. [ . . . . . no gap in the MS. ] Thow  
 schalt kepe iij condiciounys ¶ Thow schat swere in trouthe  
 in dom & in righwisnese / [593] this is to seyne  
 thow schalt swere sooth / ffor euery lesyng is a-geyns crist /  
 for Crist is verray trouthe / and thyngk wel this that  
 euery greet swerere nat compellid lafully to swere /  
 the wounde schal nat departe / from his hous / whil he  
 vseth swich onlefful swerynge [594] ¶ Thow schalt sweryn  
 ek in dom / whan thow art constreyned by thyn domys  
 man to witnesse the trouthe [595] Ek thow schalt  
 not swere for enuye / ne for fauour / ne for meede /  
 but for ryghwisnesse for declarynge of it to  
 worschepe of god & helpe of thyn euyn-  
 cristene / [596] And therfore euery man / that  
 takith goddis name in Idyl or falsely sweryth with  
 his mouth or ellis takyth on hym the name of Crist /  
 to be callid a cristene man / And lyuyth a-geyns Cristis  
 lyuynge & his techynge / alle they take goddis name  
 in ydyl [597] loke ek what seyth seynt Petyr  
 Actuum .4°. c°. Non est aliud nomen sub celo. & .c°. There  
 is non othyr name seith seynt Petyr / undyr heuene /  
 3euyn to men wherwith they <sup>1</sup>mowe be sauid / that is to  
 seyne but the name of Ihesu Crist /. [598] Tak kep ek  
 how that the name so precious is of Ihesu Crist / as seyth seynt  
 Poule / ad Philipenses 2°. In nomine Ihesu &c. / That in  
 the name of Ihesu euery kne of heuynly creaturys /  
 erthely & of helle / schulde bowe / for it is so hey  
 & so worschepeful that the cursede fend in helle schulde  
 tremble to here it nemene it / [599] Thanne  
 semyth it that men that swere so horribly bi his

blissede name that they dispise it / more boldely /  
than the cursede Iewys / or ellys the deuyll that  
tremblith whan he herith his name

[600] ¶ Now certis sythe that swerynge but ȝif it be  
laufully doon / is so heyly defendit/ moche werse is  
forswerynge falsely / And ȝit needeles /

[601] what seye we ek of hem that delite hem  
in swerynge [ . . . . . *no gap in the MS.* ]  
/ othis. And what of hem that of verray  
vsage ne cese not to swere greete othis / al be the cause  
nat worþ a straw / certis this horrible synne / [602]  
Swerynge sodeynly is ek a greet synne /  
[603] But let vs go now to that horrible synne swerynge  
of adiuracioun as don these false en-  
chauntouris or nigramanciens in bacenys ful of watyr or  
in a brygh sword / in a cerkele / or in a fir or in the schuldir-  
bon of a scheep / [604] I can nat seyn but that they  
doon cursedly & dampnably a-geyns crist & al the  
feith of holy cherche /

[605] ¶ What seyn we of hem that beleyne on  
dyuynalis / as be flight or be noyse of briddis / or of  
bestis / or by sort bi Griomanceye be dremys by chirkyng  
of doris / or krakyng of housys / by gnawynge of rattis /  
and sweche manere wrechedenesse / [606] Certis al this  
thyng is defendyt/ bi god & holy cherche / for  
whiche thei been acursed / til thei come to a-mendement  
that on swich felthe besettyn here be-leue / [607] Charmys  
for woundis / or maladie of men / or of bestis / if they  
takyn ony effect / it may be parauenture that god sufferith  
it for folk schulde ȝeue the moore feith / & reuerence to  
his name

[608] ¶ Now wele I speke of lesyngis / whiche gener-  
ally is fals sygnyfiance / of word in entent to disseyuyn  
his euene cristene / [609] Some lesyngis of whiche  
there comyth non auantage to no wight / And sum<sup>1</sup> lesyng  
turnyth to the ese or profit of a man & to



damage of anothyr man. [610] A nothir lesyng  
for to saue his lyf or his catel [. . . *no gap in MS.*] comyth  
of delit for to lye / for swich delit they wele forge a long  
tale / & peynte it with alle circumstauncis / where  
al the ground of the tale is fals / [611] sum lesyng  
comyth for he wele sustene his word Sum lesynge  
comyth of recheles-nesse / *with-outyn* a-visement and sem-  
blable thyngis /

[612] Lete vs now touche the vice of flaterye /  
wiche ne comyth not gladly but for dreed or for coueytise  
[613] ¶ flaterye is generally wrongful preysynge. flater-  
eris been the deuyllis Noricis / that norischyn his childeryn /  
*with* mylk of lesyngerye / [614] Forsothe Salamon soith  
that flaterye is wers than detraccioun / for sumtyme de-  
traccioun / makith an haunteyn man / been the moore humble /  
for he dredith detraccioun ¶ But certis flaterye that makyth  
a man / to enhauntyn his herte and his cuntenaunce /  
[615] Flatereris been the deuyllis enchantourys / for  
they make of a man to weene of hym self been lyk that he  
ne is nat lyk / [616] They been lik to Iudas that be-traysyn  
[. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] a man to selle hym  
to his enemy / that is to the [. . . [617] . . . *no gap in*  
*the MS.*] deuyllis chapilleynys / that syngyn euere placebo /  
[618] I rekene flatrye in the spicis of yre / for ofte  
tyme ȝif on man be wroth *with* a nothyr thanne wele  
he flatere sum wight to susteyne hym in his querel /

[619] speke we now of swich cursynge as comyth  
of yrous herte ¶ Malisoun generally may be seyde euery  
manere pouwer of harm Swich cursynge bereuyth euery man  
from the regne of god / as seith seynt poule / [620] And ofte  
tyme swich cursynge wrongfully returnyth a-geyn to  
hym that curseth. as a brid that turnyth a-geyn to his  
owene nest / [621] And ouer alle thynges / men oughte  
eschewe to curse here childeryn and ȝeue to the deuyll  
here engenderure as fer forth as in hym is / certis it is  
greet peril & greet synne.



[622] ¶ Lete vs thanne speke of chydyng & reproche /  
 whiche been ful greete woundis in manys herte / for  
 they onsewe the semys of frenschepe / in mannys herte  
 [623] ffor certis vnnethe may a man pleyndly been  
 accordit <sup>1</sup>with hym that hym opynly hath reuyld / &  
 repreuyd and disclaundered / ¶ This a ful gresely syne  
 as crist seyth in the gospel / [624] & take kepe now  
 that he that repreuyth his neighebores ¶ or he repreuyth  
 hym by sum harm of peyne that he hath vp-on his body /  
 as mesel crokid harlot or by sum synne that he hath doon .  
 [625] Now 3if he repreue hym by harm of peyne  
 thanne turnyth the repref to Ihesu crist / for peyne is  
 seyt by the ryȝtwise sonde of god & by his sufferaunce /  
 be it meselerie or maym or maladye / [626] & 3if he  
 repreue hym on-charitably of synne / as thow holour thow  
 dronkelewe harlot / & so forth / thanne parteynyth that  
 to the reioysynge of the dewil / that euere hath Ioye  
 that men doon synne / [627] And certis chidyng may  
 not come but of a vilens herte / for aftyr the  
 haboundauns of the herte spekyth the mouth ful ofte /  
 [628] And 3e schul vndirstonde / that loke by onyweye /  
 whan ony man schal chastise a nothir that he be war  
 of chydyng or repreuyng / For trewely but he be  
 war he may ful lyghtely quekyn the fer of angir / & of  
 wrathe whiche schulde quenche / & paraenture  
 sleth hym that he mygh[t]e chastise with benyng-  
 nete / [629] ffor as seith Salomon / The amyable tunge is  
 the tre of lyf / that is to seyne the lyf spirituel / And  
 certis a dislaue tunge sleth the spyritis of hym that  
 repreuyth . And ek of hym that is repreuyd / [630] lo  
 what seyth seynt augustyn / There is no thyng so lyk the  
 deuyllis child / as he that ofte chidith [: . *no gap in MS.*]  
 ¶ I seruauant of god behoue not to chide / [631] And  
 how that chydyng / by a vilens thyng / by-twixe alle  
 manere folk that is it certis most on-conable  
 bi-twixe a man & his wif for there is neuere reste

Ex abundancia  
cordis os loquitur

And therefore seyth Salomon. An hous that is onkeuered  
 & droppynge / & a chidyng wif been lyke /  
 [632] ¶ A man that is in a droppynge hous / in manye  
 placis / thow he eschewe the droppynge in on place.  
 it droppyth on hym in anothir place / so farth it by  
 a chydyng wif / but 3if sche schide hyn in on place  
 [. . . . *no gap in the MS.*] [633] <sup>1</sup> And therfore betere is  
 a morsel of breed with Ioye: than an housful of  
 delicis with chidyng seith Salomon / [634] Seynt  
 Poule seyth / 3e wemen be 3e subiectis to 3oure hous-  
 bondis as byhouyth in god / And 3e men louyth 3oure  
 wiuis. ad Colonienes .3°. [2 "a man" repeated in MS.]

[635] ¶ Aftyrward speke we of skornynge whiche is a  
 wekkede synne / And namely whan he skornyth a man<sup>2</sup> for  
 hise goode werkis / [636] ffor certis sweche skornerys  
 faryn lik the foule toode that may not endure to  
 smelle the sote sauour / of the vyne whan it  
 floryschith / [637] these skorneris been partyngre felauis /  
 with the deuyll / ffor they han Ioye whan the deuyll  
 wynnyth / & sorwe whan he lesith / [638] they been  
 aduersaryis of Ihesu crist / for they hatyn that he louyth /  
 that is to seyne saluacioun of soule /

[639] Speke we now of wekkede conseyl / [. . . .  
 . . . *no gap in the MS.*] whiche is a traytour for he disseyuyth  
 hym that trustith in hym ¶ Vt Achitofel ad Absolonem /  
 But natheles / 3it is his wekkede conseil fyrst a-geyn hym  
 self / [640] [. . . . .  
 . . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] that he that  
 wele a-noye a-nothyr man / he anoyeth first hym self  
 [641] And men schal vnderstonde that man schal not  
 take his conseyl of false folk ne of angry folk ne of  
 greuous folk ne of folk that louyn specially to meche  
 wordely folk / namely in conseylngre  
 of soulys //

[642] ¶ Now comyth the synne of hem that sowyn &  
 makyn discord a-mongis / folk whiche is a synne that

*crist* hateþ vttyrly & no wondir is / for he deyede  
for to make concord / [643] And moore schame do they to  
*crist* than dedyn they that *hym* crucyfyed / for god  
louth louth bettere that pes be a-mongis folk than  
he deyede his owene body. whiche that he ȝif for vnyte.  
therefore been they lekkenyd to the deuyll / that euere is  
aboute to make discord /

[644] ¶ Now comyth the synne of double tunge whiche  
as spekyn fayre be-foryn folk & wikkedely by-hynde / or  
ellis they make semblaunt / as thogh they spoke of  
good entencioun or ellis in game / & pley. and ȝit they  
speke of wekkede entent //

[645] ¶ Now comyth bewreyinge of con'seyl thourw  
whiche a man is diffamyd certis onethe may he restore the  
damage //

[646] ¶ Now comyth Manace / that is an opyn folye / for  
he that oftyn manacith : he thretheth moore than he may  
parforme / ful ofte tyme /

[647] ¶ Now comyn ydele wordis [. . . . .  
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] And ek of *hym*  
that herkenyn tho wordys / or ellys Idele wordis been  
tho that been nedeles or with-outyn entent of naturel  
profit [648] And al be it that ydele wordys / been sum-  
tyme uenyal synnys ȝit schuldyn men doutyn hem / for we  
schul ȝeue rekenynge of hem be-fore god

[649] ¶ Now comygh Iangelynge / that may not been with-  
outyn synne And as seyth Salomon it is a synne of a-pert  
folye / [650] And therefore a Philisophre seyde whan  
men axede *hym* how men schulde plese the peple /  
And he answerde do manye goode werkis / And speke fewe  
Iangelys

[651] ¶ Aftyr this comyth the synne of Iaperys / that  
been the deuyllys apis / for they make men to laughe at  
here folye / & at here Iaperyes / as folk doon at the gaudis of  
an Ape / whiche Iaperis diffendyth seynt poule [652] Loke  
how that vertevous wordis & holye confortyn hem

thattrauaylyn in the seruyse of Crist: And right soo confortyn  
the vileyns wordis & knakis of Iaperis hem that  
trauayly in the seruyse of the dewil ¶ [653] These been  
the synnys that comyth of the tunge / that comyn of yre  
& of othere synnys

[*The Remedy against Ire*]

[654]

**T**

He remedie ageyns yre / is vertue þat men  
clepyn mansuetude / that Ihon de Bonania clepith  
debonayrete / & ek a nothir wertu that men callyn  
pacienc / or suffraunce /

[655] ¶ Debonoyrete / withdrawith & refrayn-  
yth / the sterynge & the meuyng of manys corage / in his  
herte in swich maneere / that they ne skippe nat out be  
angir / ne by <sup>1</sup>yre [656] ¶ Sufferaunce sufferith sweetely alle  
the anoyauncis & the wrongis / that men doon to man  
outward [657] ¶ Seynt Ierome seith thus of debonayrete  
that it doth noon harm to no wyȝt ne seith ne for non  
harm that men doon ne seyn / he ne eschafyth not  
a-geyn resoun / [658] This vertue comyth sumtyme of  
nature. for as seyth the philisophre As man is a quik  
thyng by nature debonayre & trefable / to goodnesse /  
but whan debonayrete is enformyd / of grace thanne is  
it the more worth

[659] ¶ Pacienc is a-nothir remedye a-geyns yre / and  
is a vertu that sufferith swetly euery mannes goodnesse /  
& is not wrooth for non harm that is doon to hym  
[660] ¶ The Philisophre seyth that pacyence is thilke  
vertu that sufferyth debonayrely alle the outragis of  
aduercite / & euery wikkede word [661] This vertu  
makyth a man lik to god & makyth a man goddys  
owene deere child / as seith Crist this vertu discomfortith  
thyn enmy & therfore seith the wise man / ¶ If thou  
wilt / venqusche thyn enemy lerne for to suffere / [662] And  
thow schal vndirstonde that man suffere iiij manere



of greuauncys in outward thyngis a-geyns the wheche .iiij.  
he mote haue .iiij. maneere of paciencis

[663] The ferste greuaunce is of wekke wordis.  
thilke sufferede Ihesu Crist *with*-oute grochyng ful  
patiently whanne the Iewis dispisedyn hym  
ful ofte [664] ¶ Suffere thow therfore patiently / for the  
wise man seith If thow stryue *with* a fool. thow  
the fool be wroth or thow he laughe! algatis  
thow schalt haue no reste / [665] ¶ That othyr greuaunce  
outward / is to haue damage of thyn catel. Theere ageyns  
sufferede Crist/ ful patiently! whan he was dispoyled of al  
that he hadde / in this lyf. And that nas but hise clothis /  
[666] ¶ The .iiij. greuaunce is a man to hauen harm in  
his body. That sufferede Crist ful patiently in al his  
passioun [667] ¶ The .iiij. greuaunce is this in outragious  
labour in werkis wherfore <sup>1</sup>I seye that folk that  
makyn here seruauuntys to trauayly to greuosly or out of  
tyme as on halydayis Sothly they doon greet synne  
[668] ¶ Hereageyns sufferede crist ful patiently &  
taughte vs pacyence / whan he bar vp-on his blyssede  
schuldyr the cros on the whiche he schulde suffere  
dispitous deth/ [669] Heere may men lerne to been  
patient. ffor certis nat only cristene men been patient  
for loue of Ihesu crist And for gerdoun of the blisful  
lyf that is *perdurable* But certis the olde paynemys that  
neuere were cristene commendyn & vsyn the vertue  
of pacience

[670] ¶ A Philisophre vp-on a tyme that wolde a  
bete his disciple / for his greete trespas / ffor whiche he was  
Ameuyd / & broughte a 3erde to skoure the  
child. [671] & whan the child say the 3erde. he  
seyde to his Maystyr / what thynke 3e to do. I wele beete  
the quod his maystir for thyn correccioun / [672] Forsothe  
quod the child 3e oughte ferst to corecte 3oure self that  
haue lost al 3oure pacience for the gilt of a child.  
[673] fforsothe quod the maystyr al wepyng thow



seist soth. haue thow the 3erde myn deere sone & corekte me for myn Inpacience [674] ¶ Of pacience comyth obedience / thorw whiche a man is obedient to Crist & to alle hem to whiche he oughte to been obedyent in Crist / [675] And vndyrstond weel that obedyence is parfit whan that a man doth gladly And hastily with good herte enterly al that he schulde do [676] ¶ Obedyence generally is to parforme the doctryne of god & of hise souereynys to whiche hym oughte to been obeysaunt in al ryghtwisnesse

De Accidia<sup>1</sup>[<sup>1</sup> leaf 425 is cut out.]

[677]

[<sup>2</sup> **A**ftir the synnes of Ire I woll speke of the synnes of Accidie. ffor Enuye blyndeth the herte of a man & Ire troubllyth a man. & Accidie makith hym heuy thoughtfuH & wrawe. [678] ¶ Enuye & Ire maken bitternes in herte whiche bitternes is modir of Accidie. & be-nymeth hym the loue of aH goodness. Then is Accidie the anguysche of a trouble herte. And seynt Austyn seith. it is a-noie of goodnes & anoye of harme. [679] ¶ Certis this is a dampnable synne. ffor it doth wrong to ihesu crist. in as meche that he nymeth the seruyce that men ought to do to ihesu crist with aH diligence. As seith Salomon. [680] But Accidie doth non suche diligence. he doth aH thyng with a-noie & wrawnes. slaknes & excusacion & with dulnes & vnluste ¶ ffor whiche the book seith. A-cursid be he that doth the seruyce of god negligentli. [681] Then is Accidie

be-forn þat he fell  
in to syane.

¶ Of .3. maners  
of Estat of man  
¶ Estate of Inno-  
cencie./

¶ Estate of syn-  
fulle men ./

enemye to eueri estate of man ffor certis the estate of man is in .3. maners. [682] ¶ Either it is the estate of Innocence as was the estate of Adam. biforn that he felle in to synne in whiche estate he was holdyn to wirche as in heryng & honouryng of god [683] ¶ Another estate is the Estate of synfuH men in whiche estate men ben holdyn

to labour in praiyng to god for amendement of her  
 [. . . . .] *no gap in the MS.* ¶ Estat of grace.  
 synnes [684] ¶ Another estate is the estate of grace in  
 whiche estate he is holdyn to do werkis of penytence. And  
 certis to alle thes thynges is Accidie Enmye & con-  
 trarie. ffor he louyth no besynes at all. // [685] ¶ Now  
 certis this foule synne Accidie is eke a full gret enuye  
 to the liflode of the body. for it hath no puryaunce  
 a-yen tempera<sup>ff</sup> necessite. ffor it is for-sleuthe & for-  
 sloggeth & distroieth alle godis temperallis bi  
 rechilnes.

[686] ¶ The .4. thyng is. that Accidie is like hem ¶ Accidie is lik  
 that ben in the peyne of helle. bi cause of her slouthe to hem þat ben  
 & of her heynes. ffor thei that ben dampned ben in the peyne of  
 so boun<sup>1</sup>de that thei ne may we<sup>1</sup>l do ne we<sup>1</sup>l helle.  
 thenke. [687] ¶ Of Accidie cometh first that a man is  
 anoi<sup>ed</sup> & encombrid to don eny goodnes &  
 maketh that god hath abhomynacion of suche  
 Accidie. as seith seynt Ion. ¶ Johannes.

[688] ¶ Now cometh sleuthe that wo<sup>1</sup>l not suffre non ¶ Of Sleuthe/  
 hardnes ne no penaunce. ffor sothe slouthe is so  
 tendir & so delicate. As seith Salomon. That he wo<sup>1</sup>l not ¶ Salomon.  
 suffre non hardnes ne penaunce & therfore he  
 schendith all that he doth [689] ¶ a-yens this rotyn ¶ Remedium.  
 hertid synne of Accidie & slouthe schulde men  
 excercise hem self to don good werkis & manli  
 & vertuou<sup>1</sup>li cacchen corage we<sup>1</sup>l to don. thenk-  
 yng that our lord ihesu crist quyteth euerye good<sup>2</sup> ¶ Harl. extract  
<sup>3</sup>deede be it neuere so lytil // [690] ¶ Vsage of labour is a ¶ Cambr. be-  
 greet thyng for it makyth as seyth seynt Bernard / the gins.  
 labourer to haue stronge armys & harde senewis / And  
 slouthe makyth hem feble & tendre [691] ¶ Thanne comyth  
 dreded to begynne to werke onye goode werkis / for  
 certis he that is enclyned to synne! hym thynkyth it  
 is to greet an enpryse / for to vndyrtake to doon werkis  
 of goodnesse / [692] And castith in his herte / that the

[693] ¶ Now comyth wanhope that is dispeyr of the  
merci of god // that comyth sumtyme of to meche out-  
ragious sorwe / & sumtyme of to meche drede ymagyn-  
ynge / that he hath don so meche synne that it wele  
not auayle hym thow he wolde repente hym / and  
forsake synne / [694] thorw whiche dispeyr or drede  
he abandownyth al his herte to euery manere synne / As seyth  
seynt Augustyn [695] whiche dampnable synne / 3if that  
it contynewe on to his ende it is clepid synnyng in the  
holygost / [696] This horrible synne is so parlious  
that he that is dispeyred / there ne is no felenye ne no synne  
that he doutith for to do / As schewede weel be Iudas /  
[697] Certis a-bouyn alle synnys / thanne is this synne  
most displeasnt to Crist And most aduersarye [698]  
¶ Sothly he that dispeyrith hym is lyk the coward /  
champioun recreaunt tat seyth creaunt withoutyn nede //  
Allas alas nedeles / is he recreaunt /  
and nedeles dispeyred / [699] Certis the merci of god is  
euere redy to the penytent / And is a-bouyn alle hyse werkis  
[700] Allas can not a man be-thynken hym / of the gospel  
of seynt. Luk .iiij. where as Cryst seyth / that as weel schal  
there be Ioye in heuene vp-on a synful man that doth  
penytence than vp-on a .90. & 19 ryghful men that  
neuere ne dede synne Ne nedyn no penytence [701]  
¶ Loke ferther in the same gospel the Ioye & the  
feste of <sup>1</sup>the goode man / that hadde lost his sone whan  
his sone with repentaunce was returned to his fadyr //  
[702] Can they not remembre hem ek that as seyth  
seynt Luk .33°. how that the thef that was hangit  
be syde Ihesu crist seyde. Lord remembre of me whan  
thow comyst in-to thy regne. [703] ffor soth seyde  
Crist I sei to the / to day schalt tow be with me in  
paradys / [704] Certis there is non so horryble synne of

man that it ne may in his lyf been distroyed be penytence /  
 thorw vertu of the passioun of the deth of cryst /  
 [705] Allas what nedyth men thanne for to been dispeyred  
 sithe that his mercy so redy is / & large. Axe & haue  
 [706] ¶ Thanne comyth sompnolence / that is sluggy  
 slumbrynge / whiche makyt a man been heuy & dul in  
 body & soweles And this synne comyth of slouth /  
 [707] And Certys the tyme that by weye of resoun / man  
 schulde not slepyng / that is by the morw but ȝif there were  
 cause resonable [708] For sothly the morwe tyde is  
 most conable A man to seye hise preyeris / & for  
 to thanke his god / & for to honoure god / And to  
 ȝeuyn almesse to the poore / that comyth fyrst in the name  
 of crist // [709] lo what seyth Salomon. Who so wele  
 by the morwe a-wake to seke me he schal fynde /  
 [710] ¶ Thanne comyth necligence / or rechelesnesse /  
 that rekyth of nothyng and how that ignoraunce / be  
 modir of alle harm / Certis necligence is the noryche /  
 [711] Necligence ne doth no fors whan he schal doon  
 a thyng whedyr it be doon wel or euele /

[712] ¶ Of the remedye of these two synnys as seyth  
 the wise man / that he that dredith god / ne sparyth nough[t]  
 to don that hym auȝte to don [713] And he that louth  
 god he wele doon diligence to plesse god by hise werkis /  
 And enforce hym self with al his myght weel for to doon.  
 [714] Thanne comyth Idil'nesse / that is the ȝate of alle  
 harmys / An Idyl man is lik a place that hath none  
 wallys / the deuyllis may entre on euery syde / or shete  
 at hym at discouert by temptacyoun on euery syde /  
 [715] This ydillenesse is the thurrok of alle wekked / &  
 vylens thoutys & of alle Ianglys truffis / & of  
 alle ordure / [716] Certys this. the heuene ys ȝevyn to hem that  
 wil labouryn / & not to ydil folk / Ek dauid seyth  
 that they ne been not in the labour of men / ne they schul  
 nat been whippid with men / that is to seyne in purgatorye //



[717] ¶ Certis thanne semyth it they schul been turmentid /  
with the deuyll in helle / but ȝif they doon penytence //

[718] Thanne comyth the synne that men clepyn  
tarditas as whan a man is so laterede or taryinge / er  
he wele turne to god / And certis that is a greet folye  
he is lyk hym that fallyth in the deyth & wil non  
aryse [719] And this vice comyth of fals hope / that  
he thynkith that he schal leue longe / but that hope  
faylith ful ofte

[720] ¶ Thanne lacchesse that is he / whan that he  
begynnys / ony good werk / Anon he wele forlete it And  
stynte as doon they that haue ony wight to gouerne /  
and ne take of hym no moore keep / a non as they fynden  
ony contrarye or any anoy / [721] these been the newe  
schepperdys that letyn here scheep wetyngely go renne to  
the wolf that is in the brerys / ne do no fors of here owene  
gouernaunce [722] of this comyth pouerte / & distruccyoun  
bothe of spirituel & temperel thyngis / thanne comyth  
a maner coldnesse / that fresith al the herte of man /  
[723] Thanne comyth ondeuocioun / thour whiche a man is  
so blent. And as seyth seynt Bernard / hat swich langour / in  
soule that he may neythyr / reede ne synge in holy cherche /  
ne heere ne thynke of no deuocioun / ne trauayle with  
hise handys in no good werk that it nys to hym vnsauourry  
And al appallid / [724] thanne wexith he slow &  
slombry and soone wele be wroth / And sone is enclynynd  
to haate & to enuye / [725] ¶ Thanne comyth the synne of  
wordely sorwe / swich as is clepid tristicia / that <sup>1</sup>sleth  
man as seyth seynt Poul / [726] ffor certis swich sorwe  
werketh to the deth of the soule & of the body also  
ffor therof comyth that a man is a-nyed / of his owene lyf.  
[727] wherefore swich sorwe. schortyth ful ofte the lyf of  
man / er that his tyme is come by weye of kynde ./



## Remedium contra peccatum Accidie.

[728]

**A** Gayns this oryble synne of acyde & the braunchis of the same: There is a vertu that is callyd fortitudo / or strenthe that is an affeccoun thour whiche a man dispiseth noyouse thyngis [729]

¶ This vertu is so myghty and so vigerous / that it dar withstonde myghtyly and wysely keepe hym self from perilis that been wekkede / & wrastele a-geyn the sautys of the deuyll [730] for it enhaunsith & enforseth the soule rygh as accidie: abatith & makith it feble ¶ ffor this ffortitude may endure by long sufferance the trauaylis that been couenable

[731] This vertu hath manye spicis ¶ the ferste is clepid magnanymtee that is to seyne greet corage ¶ ffor certis there behouyth greet coragea-geyns Accidie ¶ lest that it ne swelwe not the soule by the synne of sorwe / or distroye it by wan hope. [732] this vertu makith folk vndyrtake harde thyngis & greuouse thyngis by his owene wil wysely & resonably [733] And for as mechil / as the deuyll fytith a-geyns a man more by queyntise & by slouthe: than by strenthe / therfore a man schal withstonde hym by wit & by resoun. & by discrecyoun [734] ¶ Thanne are there the vertuis of feyth / & hope in god / & hise seyntis to accomplishe the goode werkis in the whiche he purposith fermely to contynue [735] ¶ Thanne comyn seurete / or sekyrnesse. And that is whan a man ne doutyth no trauayle in tyme comynge of the goode werk that he hath begunne

[736] ¶ Thanne comyth magnificence ¶ That is<sup>1</sup> [2] to seyn when a man doth & performeth gret werkis of goodnes that he hath bigonne & that is the ende whi that men schulde do gode werkis. ffor in the accomplesyng of good werkis lith þ<sup>e</sup> grete guerdon. ¶ [737] Then is ther Constaunce that is stablenes of corage & this schulde ¶ Of Constaunce. / be in herte bi stedfast feith & in mouthe & in

<sup>1</sup> leaves 428 and 429 are cut out of the *Cambr. MS.*  
<sup>2</sup> *Harl. MS.* 1758, on leaf 221.]

beryng & in chere & in dede. [738] Eke ther ben  
mospeciall thynges & remedies a-yens Accidie in dyuers werkis  
& in consideracions of the peyne of helle & of the  
ioye of heuyn & in the truste of the grace of the holi-  
gost that woht yeuyn hym myght to performen his  
entente /

## ¶ De Auaricia /

[739]

¶ Paulus ./

**A**ftir Accidie woht I speke of Auarice & of  
Couetise. Of whiche synne seith seynt Poule  
that the rote of alle synnes is Couetise. &  
Thymoth. 6°. [740] ffor sothli when that the herte  
of man is confoundid in hit self & trouble & that the  
soule hath lost the counfort of god. þen seketh he an  
ydeff solace of worldli thynges.

¶ Augustinus ./

[741] ¶ Auarice aftir the scribeion of seynt Austyn.  
is a licorousness in herte to haue ertheli thynges.  
[742] Som other folk seyn. that Auarice is for to  
purchace manye ertheli thynges. & no thyng yeue  
to hem that han nede. [743] ¶ & vndirstonde thou  
weht that Auarice is noght onli in lond ne Cateh but som-  
tyme in science & in glorie & in euery maner of  
outragious thynges is Auarice & Couetise [744] ¶ And  
the difference be-twixe Auarice & Couetise is this.  
Couetise is for to coueite suche thynges as thou  
hast not. And Auarice is for to withholde & kepe suche  
thyngis as thou hast with-ouen rightfull nede. [745] ¶ Sothli  
this Auarice is a synne that is full dampnable. ffor aht holi  
writ cursith it & spekith a-yens hit. ffor it doth  
wrong to ihesu crist. [746] ffor it bireuyth <sup>1</sup> hym the Loue  
that men to hym owyn & turnyth hit bakwarde a-yen  
aht reson [747] & makith that the Auaricious man  
hath more hope in his Cateh. than in ihesu crist. ¶ And  
[ . . . . . ]

¶ The difference  
betwixe Auarice  
& Couetise. /

[leaf 221, back,  
Harl. MS. 1758]

. . . . . no gap in the MS.] [748] therfore seith

seynt Poule Ephesios .5°. That an Auaricious man hap more ¶ Paulus./  
his hope in thraldom of Ydolatrie.

[749] what difference is bitwixe an ydolastre & ¶ Difference be-  
an Auaricious man. But þat an ydolastre & an Auaricious man twice an Ydol-  
peraventure ne hath but a mawmet or two & the Auaricious man atre & an Auar-  
hath manye. ffor certis euerye fforeyn in his cofre is his ous man./  
a mawmet [750] & certis the synne of mawmetrie is  
[. . . . no gap in MS.] that god in þe ten comaunde-  
mentis. As berith witnes in Exodi. capitulo .20. [751] Thou  
schalt haue no fals goddis bi-forn me. Ne þou schalt make  
to the no grauyn thyng. thus is an Auaricious man that  
loueth his tresour a-forn god An ydolastre [752] thorogh  
his synne of Auarice & of couetise comen this  
hard lordschipes thorogh whiche men ben streyned  
bi tailages customes & cariages more then her  
dewte or reson is. ¶ And ellis take thei of her bonde  
men amercementis whiche myghten more resonabli be  
clepid extorcions then amercementis. [753] Of whiche  
amercementis & raunsonyng of bonde men som  
lordis stiwardis seyn that it is rightfuþ. ffor as meche as  
a cheerþ hath no temperaþ thyng that it ne is his lordis  
as they seyn. [754] ¶ But certis thes lordes don  
wrong that bireuyn her bonde folke thynges. that thei  
neuyr ne yaf hem. Augustinus. de. civitate. libro .9°. [755] ¶ Augustinus./  
¶ Soth is that the condicion of thraldom. & the first  
cause of thraldom is for synne. Genesis .5°. ¶ Genesis .5°.

[756] ¶ Thus may ye seen that the gilte deseryth  
thraldom. but not nature. [757] Wherfore these lordis  
ne schulden not meche glorifie hem in her lordschip.  
sethyn that bi naturaþ condicion. thei ben lordis ouyr  
her thrallis. but for that thraþ-dom cam first by deserte of  
synne [758] ¶ And further ouyr there as the lawe seith.  
that temperaþ godis of bonde folke ben the godis  
of her lordschipes. Ye that is for to vndirstonde. the godis  
of the Emperour to defende hem in her right. but not  
to robbe hem ne to reue hem. / [759] ¶ And therfore

¶ Seneca./

seith Seneca. Thi prudence schulde lyue benyngli with  
thyn thrallis. [760] thilke that thou clepist thyn thraff.  
ben goddis peple ffor humble folke ben cristes frendis.  
thei ben *contubernyaft* with the lorde.

[761] ¶ Thenke eke that suche seed as cherlis  
sprynge. of suche seed sprynge lordis. As weft may  
the cherle be sauýd. as the lord. [762] The same deth that  
taketh the cherle. the same deth takith the lorde. ¶ Wherefore I  
rede do right so with thi cherle as thou woldist  
thi chirle did with the. if thou were in his plite.  
[763] Euery synfuft man is a cherle to synne. I rede  
the certis that thou lord thou wirche in suche wise that  
thi cherlis rather loue the than drede the. [764]  
I wote weft there is degre a-boue degre as reson  
is & skill is that men don her deuyr ther as it is dewe.  
But certis extorcions & dispites of your vndirlynges is  
dampnable.

[765] ¶ And further ouyr vndirstonde weft that  
Conquerours or tirauntis make fuft often thrallis of  
hem that ben born of as roiaft blood. as ben thei that  
hem *conquernyn*. [766] ¶ This name of thraldom was  
neuyr knowe erste. till that Noe seide that his sone  
Canaan schulde be thraff to his bretheryn for his <sup>1</sup>synne  
[767] ¶ What seie we than of hem that pilen & don  
extorcions to holi chirche ¶ Certis the swerde that

¶ Genesis .10.  
Maledictus  
Canaan seruus  
seruorum erit  
fratribus / suis /  
[<sup>1</sup> leaf 222, Harl.  
MS. 1758]

¶ How knyght-  
hode schulde  
defende holi  
chirche./

¶ Augutinus./

men yeuyn first to a knyzt when he is newe dobbid.  
signyfieth that he schulde defende holy chirche &  
nogh t robbe hit. And who so doth is a traitour  
to crist. [768] As seith seynt Austyn. Thei ben  
deuyls wolfis that stranglen the scheep of ihesu  
crist & don wers than wolfis. [769] ¶ ffor sothli  
when the wolfe hap fuft his wombe: he stynteth to  
strangle scheep. But sothli the pilours & distroi-  
ers of godis of holi chirche ne do not so for thei ne  
stynte neuyr to pilen. [770] ¶ Now as I haue seide sethyns so  
is that synne was first cause of thraldom. then it is

¶ Of pilours &  
distroiers of holi  
chirche goodis./



thus that thilke tyme that all the worlde was in synne. then was all this worlde in thralldom & in subieccion. [771] But certis sethyns the tyme of grace cam. God ordeyned that som folk schulde be more hye in estate & hye degree & som folke more lowe & that eueriche schulde be seruyd in his estate & in degre. [772] And therefore in some contrees ther thei ben thrallis when thei han turned hem to the feith. thei maken her thrallis fre out of thralldom. And therefore certis the lord owith to his man. that the man owith to his lorde. [773] ¶ The Pope clepith hym self *seruaunt* of *seruauntis* of god. But for as meche as the state of holi chirche ne myght not han be. ne the comune profite myght han be kept in pees & reste in erthe. But if god had ordeyned that some men han heyer degre & som men lowir [774] ¶ Therfore was souereyne ordeyned to kepe & maynten & defende her vndirlynges or her sogettis in reson as fer forth as it lith in her power & noght to distroie hem ne as ferforth confounde. [775] ¶ Wherfore I seie that thilke lordis that ben thilke wolffis that de<sup>1</sup>] <sup>2</sup>vouryn the possessiouns or the catel of pouere men wrongfully with-oute mercy or mesure. [776] They schul receyue by the same mesure that they han mesured to poore folk the mesure of Ihesu crist but it be amendid [777] ¶ Now comyth deceyt be-twixe Marchaunt and Marchaund ¶ And thowschat vndirstonde that marchaundise is in manye maneris / that on is bodyly & that othir is gostely: that on is honest & lefful: & that othir is dishonest & onleful. [778] Of thilke bodyly marchaunddyse that is lefful & honest is this there that god hath ordeyned / that a rem or a cuntre is suffisaunt to hym-self: thanne is it honest & lefful that of haboundaunce of this cuntre that men helpe a nothir Cuntre that is more nedy. [779] And therefore there mote been marchauntis to brynge from that oon cuntre to that othir hire march-

[<sup>1</sup> Harl. MS. 1758  
extract ends.]

[<sup>2</sup> Camb. MS.,  
leaf 430]



aundyse / [780] That othyr marchaundyse that men  
 hauntyn / *with* fraude & trecherye And deceyt *with*  
 lesyngis & falso othis is cursed & dampnable  
 [781] ¶ Espirituele marchaundyse is propirly symonye  
 that is ententyf desyr / to beyen thyng espirituel that is  
 thyng that aparteneth to the seyntewarye of god / & to  
 cure of the soule [782] ¶ This desir 3if so be that a  
 man do his dilygence to *parforne* it / al be it that his  
 desir take noon effect. 3it is it to hem a dedly  
 syne. & 3if he be ordered. he is irregulere / [783] Certis  
 Symonye is clepid of Symon magus / that wolde a  
 bouzt for *temperel* catel / the 3ifte that god hadde 3ouyn  
 by the holy gost to seynt Petyr. & to the apostellis /  
 [784] And therefore vndyrstond that by that he that  
 sellyth & he that beyeth thyngis espirituel been  
 clepid Symonyalys / be it be catel be it be *procurynge* /  
 or by fleschely preyere of hise frendis. fleschely frendis  
 or spyrituel frendis / [785] Fleschely in two manerys  
 as by kenreede or othere frendis sothly 3if they preye  
 for hym that is not worthi & able it is Symonye 3if he  
 take the benefice / and 3if he be worthi & able: there  
 is non. [786] ¶ That othir maner is / *whan* men or  
 women preyen for <sup>1</sup>folk to auauncyn hem only for  
 wekede fleschely affeccoun that they han vn-to the *persone*  
 & that is foul symonye / [787] But certis in ceruyce  
 for whiche men 3euyng thyngis espirituel on to here  
 seruauantis / it mote been vndirstande that the seruyce  
 mote been honest & ellis nat / And ek that it be  
*with-outyn* bargaynyng & that the *parson*e be able /  
 [788] ffor as seith Seine Damasye / Alle the synys of the  
 world at regard of this synne arn as thyng of nough /  
 for it is the gretteste synne that may ben aftyr the synne  
 of lacyfer & of antecryst / [789] ffor by this syne god  
 forlesyth the cherche & the soule that he bouzte *with*  
 his precyous blood / By hem that 3euyng cherchis / to hem  
 that been notdigne [790] for they putte in theys handis / that

stelyn the soulis of Ihesu cryst And distroyen the patry-  
 monye [791] Be sweche indigne prestis & curatis /  
 han lewede men lesse reuerence of the sacramentis of  
 holy cherche. And swe[che] 3eneris of cherchis: putte  
 the 3eneris of cryst out / & puttyn in the cherche the  
 deuyllis owene sone / [792] they sleen the soulys  
 that lambis schulde kepe / to the wolf that that strangelyth  
 hem And therfore schul they neuere han part  
 of the pasture of lambis that is the blysse of  
 heuene. [793] Now comyth hasardrye with hise apor-  
 tenancis. as tablis. & raffles / of sweche comyth deceit  
 false othis chydngis / And alle rauynesse. blasphemynge  
 And renayinge of god / And hate of hise neghebourys. wast  
 of goodis. Mis spendynge of tyme. & sumtyme man-  
 slaughtere. [794] Certis hasardourys ne mow not been  
 with-oute greet synne / [. . . *no gap in the MS.*] [795]  
 Of Auaryce comyn ek lesyngis. thefte. fals witnessse. & false  
 othis ¶ And 3e that vndirstonde that these been greete synnys  
 & expres a-geyn the comandementis / of god as I haue  
 seyð / [796] ffals wytnesse: is in word & ek in deede  
 By word as for to reue thyn neighebour his goode name  
 bi thyn false witnessynge / or by-reuen hym his catel or his  
 herytage / by thyn false witnessyng <sup>1</sup>whan thou for yre or  
 for mede or for envie berist fals witnessse or accusist  
 hym. or excusest hym by thyn false witnessse. Or ellis ex-  
 cusist thyn self falsely / [797] ware 3ow 3e quest mongeris / &  
 Notarijs Certis for fals witnessenge was Susanne in ful  
 greet sorwe & payne & manye a nothir mo. [798] ¶ The  
 synne of thefte is ek expres. a-geyns goddis heste / & in  
 two maneris corporel or spirituel / [799] [Corporel]  
 As for to take thyn neighebourys catel a-geyns his wil /  
 be it be forse or be sleighte / be it be met or be mesure  
 [800] by stelynge ek of false endytementis vp-on hym / &  
 in borwyng of thyn neghebouris catel / in entente neuere  
 to paye it a-geyn / & semblable thyngis / [801] Es-  
 pirituel thefte is sacrilege that is to seyne / hurt

ynge of holy thyngis sacrede to crist / in two  
 maneris / be resoun of the holy place As cherchis or  
 cherche hawys / [802] ffor whiche euery vileyns synne that  
 men doon in swich placis / May ben clepid sacrilege / or  
 euery violence in the semblable placis / ¶ Also they that  
 withdrawyn falsely the rightis that longyn to holy  
 cherche [803] and plesynge / and generally Sacrylege  
 is to reuyn holy thyng out of holy place or onholy  
 thyng out of holy place / or holy thyng out of on-  
 holy place

*Releuacio contra peccatum Auaricie.*

[804]

**N**ow schul 3e vndirstonde that the releuyng of  
 auarice is mysericorde & pete largely takyn /  
 ¶ And men myghtyn axen why that mysericorde  
 & pete is releuyng of Auaryce [805] ¶ Certis the  
 Auaricious man / Schewith no pete ne myseri-  
 corde to the nedful man / for he delitith hym in the kepyng of  
 hes tresor & not in the rescowyng or in the releuyng of his  
 euene cristene & therfore speke I first of myserycorde  
 [806] thanne is Miserycorde as seith the philisophere  
 a vertu be whiche the corage of a man is sterid bi the  
 [. . . *no gap in the MS.*] mysessed [807] ¶ vp-on which  
 mysericorde / folwith pete / in parfornynge of charytable  
 werkis of myse<sup>r</sup>ricorde [808] And certis these thyngis  
 meuyn a man to myserycorde of Ihesu crist that he 3af  
 hym self for oure gilt And sufferede deth for mysericorde /  
 And forgaf oure original syne [809] And therby  
 releseth vs from the peynys of helle & amenuseth the  
 peynys of purgatorye by penytence / & 3euynth grace  
 weel to do and at the laste the blysse of heuene [810] ¶ The  
 specis of myserycorde been as for to lene & for to  
 3eue And to for3euyn & to relesyn and for to han  
 pete in herte / & compassioun of the myschif of his

eueue cristene and ek to chastise there as is neede  
 [811] A nothir maneere of remedye ageyns auaryce! is  
 resonable largesse But sothly heere be-howith the con-  
 sideracioun of the grace of Ihesu crist & of his  
 temperel goodis And ek of the goodis perdurable  
 that crist 3af to vs [812] & to han remembraunce of  
 the deth that he schal resceyue he not whanne wheere ne  
 how and ek that he schal forgoon al that he hath /  
 saue only that he hath spendid in goode werkis /

[813] But for asmeche as some folk been onmesur-  
 able / men oughte to eschewe fol largesse that men  
 clepyn wast. [814] ¶ Certis he that is fol large / he  
 3evith not his catel but he lesith his catel Sothli  
 wat thyng that he 3euyth for veynglorye as to  
 menstrallis & to folk to beryn his renoun in the  
 world he hath synne therof & non almesse  
 [815] Certis he lesyth foule his good / that he ne sekyth  
 with the 3ifte of his good no thyng but synne.  
 [816] he is lyk to an hors that that sekyth rathere to drynkyn  
 drouy or trouble watyr than for to drynke watyr of the  
 cleere welle. / [817] ¶ And for as meche as they [. . . .  
*no gap in MS.*] schulde not 3euyyn to hem apartenyth thilke  
 malicioun that Crist schal 3euyyn at the day of dome to  
 hem that schuln be dampned

### Sequitur Gula

<sup>1</sup> [Two figures, of a man, 'Glotenye', riding on a bear or sloth?, and of a woman, 'Abstinence', crown'd and halo'd, with a jug in the right hand, and a flower in the left. See the Society's Chaucer Autotypes, Part 2.]

[818]

**A**ftir Auarice comyth Glotenye whiche is expres ek  
 a-geyns the comaundement of god Glotenye/ is  
 vnmesurable apetit to ete or to drynke or ellis to don  
 I-now to the onmesurable appetit / & disorderneyd  
 coueytise to etyn or to drynke [819] ¶ This synne  
 corruppid / al this world as is weel schewyd in the  
 synne of adam & of eue. Loke ek what seyth seynt  
 poule of glotenye. [820] Manye seyth seynt Poule goon of



whiche I haue ofte seyde to þow & now I seye it wepyng  
that been the enmyis of the croys of crist of  
whiche the ende is deth and of whiche here wombe is  
here god & here glorie in confusioun of hem that so  
deuouryn erthely thyngis [821] he that is vsaunt to  
this synne of glotenye he ne may no synne withstonde  
he mot been in seruage of alle vicis / for it is the deuillis  
hord there he hydith hym and restith [822] this  
synne hat manye spicis / ¶ The ferste is dronkenesse /  
that is the horrible sepulture of mannys resoun / And ther-  
fore whan a man is dronkyn: he <sup>1</sup>hath lost resoun &  
this is dedly synne // [823] ¶ But sothly whan a  
man is not woned to strong drynk & parauenture ne  
knowith not the strenthe of the drynk or hath febilnesse  
in his heed / or hath trauayled / thour whiche he drenkyth  
the moore / Al be he sodeynly cauȝt with drynk it is no  
dedly synne but venyal [824] ¶ The secunde spece of  
glotenye is // that the spirit of a man / wexeth al trouble  
for dronkenesse: bereuyth hym the discrecioun of his wit.  
[825] ¶ The thredde spece of Glotenye is whan a man  
deuourith his mete / & hath not ryghtful manere of etyng.  
[826] ¶ The fourte is whan thour the greete habund-  
aunce of his mete. the humuris in his body been dis-  
temperede [827] ¶ The fifte is forȝetefulnesse be too meche  
drynkyng for whiche sumtyme a man forȝetith on the  
morwe what he dede at euyn or on the nyght be-forn

[828] ¶ In othere manerys been distynit the specis of  
glotenye aftyr seynt Gregorye ¶ The ferste is for to etyn be-  
fore tyme of etyng ¶ The secunde is whan a man get hym  
to delicat mete or drynk. [829] ¶ The thredde whan  
men takyn ouyr mesure ¶ The forte is  
curiositee with greet entent to makyn & apparaylyn  
his mete ¶ The fifte is for to ete gredileche. [830] ¶ These  
been the fyue fyngerys of the deuyllis hand be whiche  
he drawyth folk to synne



[<sup>1</sup>] MS. *repeats* hope to haue the blysse of heuene ¶ The felawis of abstynence been  
<sup>2</sup>Attemperaunce. that holdith]

## Remedium contra peccatum Gule

[831]

**A**geyns gloteny is the remedie Abstynence as  
 seyth Galiene / but that holde I not meritoye / 3if  
 he do it only for the hele of the body. Seynt  
 Augustyn wele that abstynence be doon for vertu &  
 not for vice / but with pacyence. [832] Abstynence he seyth is  
 lytil worth but 3if a man haue ryght good wil therto & but it be  
 enforced bi pacience / And be charite & that men don it for  
 godis sake And in <sup>1</sup>hope to haue the blysse of heuene

[833] ¶ The felawis of abstynence been attemper-  
 aunce / that holdith<sup>1</sup> the meene in alle thyngis. Ek  
 schame that eschewith al disoneste ¶ Sufferaunce that  
 sekith no ryche metis ne drenkys / ne doth no fors of too  
 outragious apparaylynge of mete. [834] Mesure also  
 that restreynyth by resoun the dislaue appetit of etynge /  
 Sobirnesse also that restreynyth the outrage of drynk.  
 [835] Sparynge also that restreynyth the delicat man as is to  
 sitte longe at his mete & softly wherfore some folk  
 stondyn of here owene wil to etyn at the lasse leyser.

[Two paintings, "Lecherye," seated on a goat, with a sparrow (both animals types  
 of lechery) on her right forefinger, and "Chastite" standing on the rump and forepaws  
 of some twyny couchant tuakt animal, with a spear in her hand.]

## Sequitur de peccato Luxurie

[836]

**A**ftyre glotonye comyth Lecherye For these  
 two synys been so nygh Cosynys / that ofte tyme  
 thei wele not departe god [837] wot This synne  
 is ful displeaunt thyng to god For he seyde hym  
 self. Do no lecherye And therfor he putte greete  
 peynys a-geyn this synne in the olde lawe / [838] ¶ If  
 woman thral were takyn in this synne sche schulde  
 been betyn with stonys to the deth. And 3if sche weere a gentil  
 weman sche schulde be slayn with stonys / And if sche  
 we're a bischopis doughtyr sche schulde been brent by  
 godis comaundement. [839] ferthere ouyr bi the  
 synne of lecherye god drenkte al the world / at the

diluge / and aftyr that he brente .v. ceteis with thundyr  
lizth & sank in to helle

[840] ¶ Now lat vs speke of that stynkende  
Synne of lecherye. that men clepe auouterye of weddede  
folk / that is to seyne that ȝif that on of hem be weddit  
or ellis bothe. [841] Seynt Ioon seyth auouteryis  
schuln been in helle in a stark brennyng fere  
of bronston [ . . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] for the  
stynk of here ordure [842] ¶ Certis the brekyng of  
this sacrementis is an orrible thyng / it was makyd of  
god hym self in Paradys. & confermed be Ihesu crist. as  
witnesseth seynt Mathew / in the gospel / A man schal lete  
fadir & modyr / & takyn hym to his wif / And they  
schuln ben two in on flesch. [843] This sacrement be-toke-  
nyth the knyttyng to-gedere of Crist & of holy chirche /  
[844] And nat only that god forbad auoutrye in dede.<sup>1</sup>  
but ek he comaundede that thow schuldist not coueyte thyn  
neyhebouris wif. [845] And in this heste seyth seynt  
augustyn: is forbodyn alle manere coueytise to doon  
lecherye. lo what seyth seynt Mathew in the gospel. That  
ho so seth a woman to coueytise. of his lust he hath  
doon lecherye with hire in herte / [846] Heere may ȝe  
seen that nat only the dede of this synne / is forbodyn.  
but ek the desir to doon that synne / [847] This cursede  
synne a-noyeth greuously hem that it hauntyn. & ferst  
to here soule. for he obligeth it to synne. & to peyne of  
deth that is perdurable [848] On to the body anyeth  
it greuously also. ffor it dreyeth hym And wastith hym also &  
schyndyth hym. And of his blood he makyth sacrificise to the  
deuyll of helle it wastith his catel [ . . . . .  
[849]. . . . . *no gap in  
the MS.*] on women. // ȝet it is a foulere thyng whan that  
for swich ordure wemen spendyn vp-on men here catel  
& here substance. [850] This synne as seyth the prophete /  
bereuyth man & woman here goode fame & al here  
honour / & it is ful plesaunt to the deuyll. For therby

[<sup>1</sup> *MS. adds in  
text, Non concu-  
piscis uxorem  
proximi tui (on  
an erasure).*]

wynnyth he the more party of this world  
 [851] And ryght as a marchaunt delytith hym most  
 in chaffare that he hath most auau[n]tage of. ryght  
 so delytith the feend in this ordure

[852] ¶ Thys is that othir hand of the deuyl *with* .v.  
 fyngerys / to cache the peple to his vilanye / [853] The  
 ferst fyngir is / the fool lokynge of the fool woman.  
 And of the fool man. that sleth rygh as the Baselycok  
 sleth folk by the venyn of his syth. for the coueytise  
 of eyen: folwith the coueytise of the herte. [854] ¶ The  
 secunde fyngir is the vyleyns touchynge in wekede  
 manere And therefore seyth Salomon. that ho so  
 touchith a woman or handelith: he farth lyk to hym  
 that handelyth the skorpyoun that styngith & sodeynly  
 sleth thour his enuenymynge. As ho so touche  
 warm pych. it schent hise fyngerys [855] The thredde is  
 foule wordys. that farth lyk fuyr that rygh a-non  
 brennyth the herte. [856] The fourte fynger is. the  
 kyssynge. And trewely he weere a greet fool that wolde  
 kysse the mouth of a brennynge ouene or of a forneys  
 [857] And moore folys been they. that kessyn in vilenye.  
 for that mouth is the mouth of helle. and namely these  
 olde dotardys holouris ȝit wole they kisse  
 and smatere hem thow they may nat doon. [858] Certis they  
 been lyke to houndys. for an hound whan he comyth by  
 the roser. or by othere beauteis. thow he may not  
 pisse. ȝit wele he heue vp his leg and make a cun-  
 tenau[n]ce to pisse. [859] And for that manye men wenyth.  
 that he may not synne for no lykerousnesse that he doth  
 with his wif. Certis ȝit the opynyoun is fals God wot a  
 man may sleen hym self. *with* his owene knyf And make  
 hym self dronke of his owene ale or of his owene wyn. [860]  
 Certis be it wif be it child. or ony wordely thyng that he  
 louyth by-forn god. it is his maumet. & he is an ydolastre.  
 [861] Man schulde louyn his wif by dyscrecyoun  
 paciently. & attemprely. And thanne is sche as they it

weere his systir. [862] ¶ The fyfte fyngir of the deuyllys hand: is the stynkyng dede of lecherye. [863] Certis the .v. fyngyr of glotenye the fend put in the wombe of a man. And *with* his fyue fyngerys of lecherye: he grypyth hym by the regnys / for to throwyn hym in-to the furneys of helle. [864] theree as they schal have <sup>1</sup>the fyre that euere schal laste / & wepyng & waylyng & scharp hongir & thurst grymnesse of deuyllis / that schuln al to-trede hem *with-outyn* [. . . *no gap in MS.*] ende. [865] ¶ Of lecherye as I seyde Sourdyn dyuerse spechis / as fornyacioun. that is between man & woman that been not maried. And this is dedly synne. and a-geyns nature. [866] Al that is enemy & distruxioun to nature: is a-geyns nature [867] parfay The resoun of a man tellyth eek hym weel that it is dedly synne. ffor as moche as god forbad lecherye And seynt poule 3euyth hem the regne that ne is dewe to no wy3t But to hem that don no dedly synne. [868] A nothir synne of lecherye is: to bereue a maydynhede. for sertis he that so doth: he castyth a maydyn out of the heyeste degre that is in this present lyf. [869] And be-reuyth hire the ilke precyouse freut that the book clepith the hunderede freut I ne can seye it noon othere weyis in engelisch but in latyn it hy3te Centesimus fructus [870] Certis he that so doth is cause of manye damagis & vylenyis mo than ony man can rekene. ryght as he sumtyme is cause of alle damagis that bestis doon in the feeld / that brekyn hegis of the closeure / thorw whiche he distroyeth that may not been restored. [871] ffor certis no more may maydynhede: [. . . *no gap in the MS.*] than an arm that is smetyn from the body may returne a-geyn & wexe. [872] Sche may haue mercy this wete I weel / 3if sche haue wil to don penytence / but neuere schal it be that sche nas corrupt. / [873] And al it so be. that I haue spoke sumwhat of avouterye: it is good to schewyn perilyls that longyn to a-uouterye. ffor to eschewe that foule



synne // [874] Auouterye in latyn is for to seyne aprochyng  
 of othere manys bed / thorw whiche / tho that whilom  
 weere on flesch Aboundone here bodyis to othere personys.  
 [875] Of this synne as seyth the wyse man folwyn  
 manye harmys. Fyrst brekyng of feyth. And certis in  
 feyth is the keye of cristendom [876] And what that  
 feyth is brokyn & lorn: sothly cristendam stant  
 veyn. And withoutyn freut. [877] this syne is ek a  
 thefte. for thefte generally is as to reue a wight his thyng  
 ageyns his wil [878] <sup>1</sup>Certis this is the fouleste thefte  
 that may be / whan a woman stelyth hire body from  
 hire husbonde & 3euyth it to hire holour / to defoulyn  
 hire And stelyth hire soule from cryst / & 3euyth it to  
 the deuyll / [879] this is a foulere thefte than for to breke a  
 cherche & stele away the chalys ¶ ffor these auoutyeris  
 brekyn the temple of god / spirituelly & stelyn the vessel  
 of grace that is the body & the soule / For whiche Crist  
 schal distroye hem as seyth seynt poule. [880] ¶ Sothly  
 of this thefte doutede greetly Iosep whan that his lordys  
 wif preyede him of vylenye / whan he seyde lo myn lady  
 how myn lord hath take to me vndyr myn warde al that he  
 hath in this world / ne nothyng of his thyngis is out of  
 myn power but only 3e that been hise wyf [881] And  
 how schulde I thanne do this wekedenesse & synne so  
 horyble a-geyns god. & a-geyns myn lord / god it for-beede  
 Allas al to lytil is swich trouthe now I-founde [882] The  
 thredde harm is the fylthe thorw whiche they breke  
 the comaundement of god / & defoule the auctour of  
 matrymonye that is cryst [883] for certis in so meche  
 as the sacrament of maryage is so noble & so dygne: so  
 meche is it grettere synne for to brekyn it for god  
 made maryage in paradys In the estaat of innocence to  
 multiplye mankynde in the seruyse of god / [884] and  
 therefore is the brekyng therof the more greuous / Of whiche  
 brekyng comyn false eyrys ofte tyme that wrongfully  
 occupye menys eritage And therefore god wele putte



hem out of the regne of heuene that is herytage to goode folk. [885] ¶ Of this brekyng comyth ek that folk that onwar weddyn or synnyn *with* here owene kenrede / And namely thilke harlotys / that hauntyn bordelys / of this folk: women mowe be lykenede to a comune gonge where as men porgin here ordure. [886] // What sey we ek of putruse that lyuyn by the horryble synne of putrye And constreynyn wemen to zeuyn to hem a certeyn rente of here bodyly putrye. 3a sumtyme of his owene wif or his child as doon these baudys. Certys these <sup>1</sup>been cursede synnys [887] ¶ Vndyrstond ek that auouterye is set in the ten comaundementis be-twixe thefte & manslaucht: for it is the gretteste thefte that may be for it is thefte of body & of soule / [888] and it is lyk to homycyde / for it keruyth a too / & brekyth atwo: hem that ferst were makid o flesch. And therfore by the olde lawe of god: they schulde been slayn / [889] But natheles by the lawe of Ihesu crist that is lawe of pite / whan he seyde to the woman that was foundyn in auouterye / & schulde han ben slayn *with* stonys after the wil of the Jewys as was here lawe. Go *quod* Ihesu crist & haue no more wil to synne or wille no more to synne. [890] ¶ Sothly the vengeance of Auouterye: is awardit to the peynys of helle. but if so be that that it be disturbit be penytence [891] ¶ 3it been there moore spicis of these cursede synne / as whan that on of hem is relygious / or ellis bothe / or of folk that been entrid in-to ordere. as subdekene / dekene. & preest / or ospitallerys / And euer the heyere that he is in ordere: the moore is the synne [892] ¶ The thyngis that gretly aggregyn here synne: is the brekyng of here awowe of chastite whan they reseceyuyn the ordere. [893] And ferthere ouyr soth is that holy ordere is cheef of al the tresore of god / & his especial sygne & marke of chastite to schewe that they been ioyned / to chastite whiche that is most precious lyf that is / [894] and these orderede folk been specially tyelede to god / and of [ .

. . . . .  
 . . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] his  
 peple / for they leuyn of the peple. [ . . . . .  
 . . . . .  
 . . *no gap in the MS.*] [895] Prestis been aungellys / as by  
 the dignetee of here myserie but forsothe seynt Poule  
 seyth that Sathanas transformede hym in an angel of  
 lyght. [896] Sothly that preest that hauntyth dedly  
 synne he may been lykkened to the aungel of derknesse  
 transformed hym in to the aungel of lygh. he semyth Aungel  
 of lyght but forsothe he is aungel of derknesse  
 [897] Sweche prestis been the sonys of belyal as  
 seyth in the book of kyngis / that they weere the  
 sonys of Belyal that is the deuyt. [898] Belial is to seyne  
 with-outyn Iuge / And so farn they. hem thynkyth  
 they been free and haue no Iuge no moore. than hath a fre  
<sup>1</sup>bole / that takyth euery cow of the toun that hym likyth /  
 [899] So farn they be women / for riȝt as on  
 fre bole is I-nowgh for al a toun: riȝt so is a wekkede  
 prest corupecioun I-now for al a parisch or for al a  
 cuntre / [900] these prestis as seyth the bok ne  
 kunne not mynystre the myserie of presthode to the peple / ne  
 god ne knowe they not / they ne helde hem nat a-payed / as  
 seith the book of sodyn flesch that was to hem offered: but they  
 take by forse the flesch tat is raw. / [901] Sertis so  
 these schrewis / ne holde hem nat apayed / of rostede flesch  
 & sode flesch[h] with whiche the peple fedyth hem with  
 greet reuerence / but they wele haue raw flesch of folkys  
 wyuys / And here douȝteris / [902] And sertis these  
 women that consentyn to here harloterye: doon gret  
 wrong to crist & to holy cherche & alle halwys &  
 to alle soulis. for they bereue alle these hym that schulde  
 worschepe cryst & holy cherche & preye for cristene  
 soulys [903] And therfore han sweche prestis / & here  
 lemanys ek that consentyn to here lecherye: the malysoun  
 of al the court cristene til they come to a-mendement.

[904] ¶ The thredde spece of auouterye: is sumtyme be-twixe  
 a man & his wif / And that is whan they take no reward  
 in here assemblynge: but only to here fleshly delit / as  
 seyth seynt Ierome / [905] and ne rekkyn of no thyng but  
 that they been assemblit / bi cause that they been maryed /  
 al is good I-now as thynkyth to hem / [906] but in swich  
 folk / hat the deuyl power as seit the aungel Raphael  
 to Thobie / for in here assemblynge they putte Ihesu  
 crist out of here herte & 3euyn hem self to alle ordure.  
 [907] The forte spece is the assemblynge of hem that been  
 of [ . . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] oon affynytee. Or  
 ellis of hem *with* whiche here faderis / or here kenrede  
 han delid / in the synne of lecherye / this synne makyth  
 hem lyk to houndys that take no keep to kenrede.  
 [908] And certis parentele is in two manerys othir  
 gostely oth[ir] fleshly. Gostly as for to dele with his  
 gossib. [909] for rygh so as he that engenderyth a child /  
 is his fleshely fadyr: rygh so is his godfadyr his fadyr  
 esspirtuel. for whiche a weman may in no lasse synne  
 assemble *with* hire gossib than *with* hire owene fleyschely  
 brothyr. [910] ¶ The fyfte spece is. thilke abo<sup>l</sup>mynable  
 synne of whiche abhomynable synne that no man onethe  
 oughte speke of [. . . . .  
 [911] . . . . .  
 . . . . . *no gap in*  
*the MS.*] horrible synne [. . . . .  
 . . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] that schynyth on the  
 myxene. [912] A nothir synne apartenyth to lecherye that  
 comyth slepynge and this synne comyth ofte to hem  
 that been maydenys And ek to hem that been corrupt  
 & this synne men clepyn polucioun that comyth of iij  
 manerys / [913] Sumtyme of languyschyng of body for  
 the humouris been to ranke & habundant in the body  
 of man / Sumtyme of Infyrmyte for the febillesse of the  
 vertu retentyf / as Phisyk makyth mencyoun Sumtyme of  
 surfeit of mete & drynk. [914] And sumtyme of

vyleyns thoughtys that been enclosede in mannys mynde  
whan he gooth to slepyn / whiche may not been withoutyn  
synne / For whiche men muste kepe hem wysely / or ellis  
men may synne ful greuously.

Remedium contra peccatum luxurie

[915]  
**N**Ow comyth the remedie a-geyns lecherye & that  
is generally chastite & contynence that re-  
streynyth alle dysordenee meoungis that comyn  
of fleschely talentys [916] And euer the gretter  
meryt schal he han / that most restreynyth the  
wekede eschewyngis of the ordure of this synne And this is in  
two manerys that is to seyne chastite in maryage and chastyte  
in wedewehode / [917] Now schalt thou vndyrstonde that  
matrymonye is lefful assemblynge of man &  
woman that resseyuyn be wertu of this sacrement the  
bond thurgh whiche they may not be departid in al here  
lyf that is to synne whiche that they leuyn bothyn.  
[918] This as seyth the bok is a ful greet sacrement /  
god makede it as I haue seyde in paradys / And wolde hym  
self been born in maryage / [919] & for to halwyn in maryage  
he was at a weddyng where as he turnede watyr in to  
wyn / whiche was the ferste myrakele that he wrougte / in  
erthe by-forne hise dissyplys / [920] Trewe effect of  
maryage / clenysyth fornyeacyoun / & replenyschith holy  
cherche of goode lynage / for that is the ende <sup>1</sup>of maryage  
& chaungith dedly synne in to venyal synne be-twyxen  
hem that been I-weddyt / & makyth the hertis of on  
of hem that been I-weddyt as weel as the bodyis  
[921] Verray maryage was establysschid / by  
god er that synne be-gan. whan naturel lawe was in his  
ryghtepoynt in paradys. ¶ And it was ordeynyd / that oon man  
schulde han but oon woman And on woman but on man  
As seyth seynt augustyn by manye resonys /

[922] ffyrst for maryage is figurd be-twyxe crist &



holy cherche / & that othir is for a man is heuyd of  
 a woman. algate by ordenaunce it schulde be so.  
 [923] For if a woman hadde mo men than oon: thanne  
 schulde sche haue mo heuedys than on / And that were an  
 horyble synne / by-forn god / And ek A woman ne  
 myghte not / plesse two manye men at onys and also  
 there schulde neuere been pees ne reste amongis hem / for  
 eueryche wolde axe his owene thing [924] ¶ And  
 ferthere ouyr no man schulde knowe his owene en-  
 genderure ne ho schulde haue his erytage / And the  
 woman schulde been the lesse be-louyd / for the tyme that  
 sche weere comeynt to manye men

[925] ¶ Now comyth how that a man / schulde bere hym  
 with his wif & namely in two thyngis / that is to  
 seyne in sufferaunce & reuerence as shewith crist  
 whan he made ferst woman / [926] for he ne made hire  
 not of the heed of Adam: for [sche] schulde not cleyne to  
 greet lorschepe / [927] For there as the woman hath the  
 maystrye: sche makyth to greet disray There nedyn none  
 exsaumplis of this / the experience day be day  
 oughte I-now suffyse. [928] ¶ Also certis god ne made not  
 woman / of the foot of Adam / for sche schulde not ben  
 holdyn to lowe / for sche can not pacyently suffere / but god  
 made woman of the ribbe of man: for woman schulde  
 been felawe on to man. [929] Man schulde beryn hym vnto his  
 wif / in feyth in trouthe / & in love as [seyth] seynt  
 Poule that a man schulde louyn his wif as crist lovede  
 holy cherche that louede it so weel that he deyede for it /  
 So schulde a man for his wif If it weere neede.

[930] ¶ Now how that a woman schulde been subiect  
 to hyre housbonde / that tellyth seynt Petyr fyrst<sup>1</sup> in obedi-  
 ence / [931] And ek as seyth the Decree a woman that  
 is wif as longe as schche is a wyf sche hath non  
 autorite to swere ne bere witnesse with oute leue of  
 hire husbonde that is here lord/ algatis he schulde be so  
 be resoun / [932] sche schulde ek seruyn hym in alle



onestee / & been attempre of hire aray I wot wel  
that they schulde sette here entent to plesse here hus-  
bondis. But not by queyntyse of aray [933] ¶ Seynt  
Ierom seyth that vyuyys that been apparaylede in silk and  
in precious purpure: ne mowe not clothe hem in Ihesu  
crist What seith seynt Ion ek in thys matyere.  
[934] Seynt gregory ek seyth that no wight sekyth  
precious aray: but only for veynglorie to been  
honoured the moore be-forn the peple. [935] It is a greet  
folye a woman to haue a greet aray outward / And in  
hire self be foul inward [936] ¶ A wif schulde ek be  
mesurable / in lokinge & in berynge & in laughynge  
& discreet in alle hire wordis / & hire dedis. [937] And  
a-bouyn alle wordely thyngis sche schulde loue hire husbonde  
with al hire herte / & to hym been trewe / of hire body /  
[938] so schulde an husbonde been to his wif /  
For sythe that alle the body is the husbondis so schulde  
hire herte been / or ellis there is by-twixe hem two: as in  
that: no parlyt maryage [939] ¶ Thanne schal we vndyr-  
stonde that for thre thyngis a man & his wyf fleschly  
moun assemble The fyrste is in entent of engen-  
derure of childeryn to the seruyse of good / for certis there is  
the cause fynal of matrymonye [940] ¶ A nothir cause is to  
zeldyn euerych of hem to othir the dettis of here bodijs /  
for neythyr of hem hath power of here owene body.  
The thredde is for to eschewe lecherye & vilenye /  
The forte is forsothe dedly synne [941] ¶ As to the  
fyrste is meritorye the secunde also. For as seith the  
Decree / that sche hath merite of chastite that zeldyth to  
hire husbonde the dette of hire body. 3e thow it be  
a-geyn hire likyng & the lust of hire herte. [942] The  
thredde manere is venyal synne / [ . . . . .  
. . . . . no gap in the MS.] for the  
corupecioun & for the delyt. [943] The fourte  
manere is for to vndirstonde / 3if they assemble only for  
amorous loue / & for noon of the forseide causys / but

for to exemple thilke brennyng delit <sup>1</sup>they rekke  
neuere how ofte Sootly it is dedly synne. And that with  
sorwe some folk wele peynyn hem more to doon<sup>2</sup> than  
here apetit suffisyth.

[944] ¶ The secunde manere of chastite is / for to been  
a cleene wedewe / & eschewe the enbrasyngis of man /  
And desyre the enbrasyngis of Ihesu crist / [945] These  
been tho that han been wyuys And han forgetyn here hus-  
bondys. And ek wemen that han doon lecherye. & been  
resseyuyd be penytence. [946] And certis ȝif that a wyf  
coude kepyn hire al chast by lycence of hire husbonde / So  
that sche ȝeue noon occasyoun that he agilte it  
were to hire a greet merite. [947] This manere  
of wemen that obseruyn chastite [ . . . . .  
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] in clothynge  
& in cuntenaunce abstinent in etynge &  
drynkyng in spekyng & in deede they been the  
vessel or the Boyste of the blyssede Magdelyn that  
fulfyllith holy cherche of good odour [948] ¶ The iij  
manere of chastite<sup>3</sup> is vyrgynyte / & it be-houyth that it  
be holy in herte and cleene of body thanne is sche  
spouse to Ihesu crist<sup>4</sup>. And sche is the lyf of aungellis /  
[949] Sche is the preysynge of this world / And sche is as  
these martyrys egalyte / sche hat in hire that tunge may  
not telle / ne herte thynke / [950] Virgynyte bar oure lord  
Ihesu crist. And virgyne was hym selue.

[951] ¶ Anothir remedye ageyn lecherye is this / specyally  
to withdrawe sweche thyngis as ȝeuyyn occasioun to thilke  
vilenye as ese etynge & drynkyng. ffor certis whan  
the pot boylyth strongely<sup>5</sup> the beste remedye is to with-  
drawe the feer [952] Slepyng longe in greet quyete<sup>6</sup>  
is ek a gret noryce to lecherye

[953] ¶ A nothir remedye a-geyn lecherye is that a  
man or a woman eschewe the cumpayngne of hem be  
whiche he doutyth to been temptyd / For al be it so / that the  
dede is withstonden ȝit is there greet temptacioun

[954] Sotly a whit wal al thow it brenne not  
with stekynge of a candele: 3it is the wal blak of the  
lyght. [955] Ful ofte tyme I reede that no man ful truste in  
his owen perfeccioun. but he be strengere than Sampson. or  
holyere than Danyel. And wisere than Salomon

[956] ¶ Now aftyr that I haue declared / 3ow as I can  
the seuene dedly synnys / And some of here braunchis. &  
here remedyis. Sothly 13if I coude I wolde telle 3ow the  
ten Comaundementis. [957] but so high doctryne I lete to  
deuynes. Natheles I hope to god they been touchede in this  
treyse eueryche of hem alle. /

Sequitur iij<sup>a</sup>.<sup>2</sup> pars Penitencie <sup>3</sup>Decem mandata<sup>3</sup>

[<sup>2</sup> iij<sup>a</sup> and <sup>3</sup>—  
corrected.]

[958]

**N**Ow foras meche as the secunde partye of penytence  
stant in confessioun of mechil as I be-gan in the  
ferste chapitere I seye seynt Augustyn seyth /  
[959] Synne is euery word / & euery dede & al that  
men coueyte ageyn the lawe of Ihesu crist And  
this is for to seyne. in herte in mouth & in dede by the fyue  
wittys / that is by herynge syghte smellynge tastynge  
or sauourynge and felynge [960] ¶ Now is it good to  
vndyrstondyn ¶ That þat aggreggith mechil euery synne /  
[961] Thow schat considere what that thow art that dost  
that synne / Whedyr thow be male or femele / 3ong. or  
old / gentil. or thral / fre. or seruaunt. hol or sek /  
weddit or sengele / ordered. or onordered / wis. or fol.  
Clerk. or Seculer / [962] yf sche be of thyn kynrede. bodyly  
or gostely or noon / 3if ony of thyn kenrede haue synned  
with hire or non And manye mo thyngis

[963] ¶ A nothir circumstaunce is this / Whethir it be  
doon in fornyacioun or in auouterye / or non. [. . . .  
. . . no gap in the MS.] in manere of homycide or non /  
horrible greete synnys. or smale & how longe thow hast  
contynued in synne [964] ¶ The thredde circumstaunce is  
the place there thow hast do synne. Whethyr in othere

menys hovs or in thyn owene. In feeld or in cherche  
 or in cherche hawe. in cherche dedicat or non /  
 [965] ffor if the cherche be halwyd. And man or woman  
 spylle his kynd *withinne* that place be woye of synne / or be  
 wekede temptacioun / the cherche is entretydede [ . . .  
 . . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] [966] And the  
 prest that dede swiche. the terme of al his lyf he  
 schulde not synge no masse. & 3if he dede he schulde  
 dodedly synne. at euery tyme that he schuldes synge<sup>1</sup> messe.  
 [967] ¶ The fourte circumstance is by sweche medya-  
 tourys or be sweche messangerys / as for entysement or for  
 consentement to bere compaygnye with fals schepe. for  
 manye a wreche for to bere compaignye wele go to the  
 deuyll of helle [968] wherfore they that eggyn or con-  
 sentyn / to the synne been partenerys of the synne / And  
 of the temptacyoun of the synnere

[969] ¶ The fifte circumstance is / how manye tymys  
 that he hath synnyd / 3if it be in his mynde / & how ofte  
 that he hath falle / [970] for he that hath ofte falle in synne /  
 he dispiseth the mercy of god / and encresith his synne  
 And is vnkynde to cryst / And he wexeth the moore feble  
 to withstonde synne / & synnyth the moore lyghtely /  
 [971] & the lattere aryseth / & is the moore eschew for  
 to schryue hym / an namely to hym that is his con-  
 fessour. [972] For whiche that folk whan they falle a-geyn  
 in there olde folyis othir they for-3ete here olde confessouris  
 al outrely or ellys they departyn here schrifte in dyuers  
 placis But sothly sweche departede schrifte deseruyth no  
 mercy of god / of hise synnys [973] The sexte Circum-  
 stance is why that a man synnyth as by temptacyoun /  
 & 3if hym selue procure the ilke temptacyoun or by the ex-  
 cytyng of othere folk. or if he synne *with* a woman by  
 force or by hire owene assent [974] orr 3if the woman  
 maugre hire heed / hath been aforced or non / this  
 schal sche telle. for coueytise or for pouerte / &  
 3if it was hire procuryng or non & swiche manere



harneyes [975] ¶ The Seuynte circumstance / is in what manere he hath doon his synne / or how that sche haue sufferede that folk han don to hire [976] & the same schal the man telle with alle circumstauncys And whedyr he hath synnyd with comoun bordel wemen or noon / [977] or don his synne in holy tymys or non In fastyng tyme or non / or by forn his schrifte / or after his laste schrifte / [978] and hath paraenture brokyn therfore his penaunce enioyned be whos helpe & whos conseyll / by sorcerye / or craft al must ben told [979] ¶ Alle these thyngis after that they been greete<sup>1</sup> or smale engreggyn the conceyence of man & ek of the prest that is thyn Iuge may the betere been auysed of his Iugement in zeuyng of thyn penance & that is after thyn contrycyoun [980] ¶ ffor vnderstonde wel that after that tyme that a man hath defouled his bapteme by synne if he wele come to saluacioun / there is non othir weye but be penytence & schryfte and satisfaccioun / [981] & namely by the two / if there be a confessour to whiche he may schryue hym / And the threde If he haue lyf to parforme it

[982] ¶ Thanne schal men loke and consydere that ȝif he wele make a trewe & a profitable confessioun there muste been .iiij. condisciounys / [983] ffirst it moote been in sorweful [ . . . . . ]

. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*  
bittynesse of myn herte / [984] this condicioun of bittynesse hath .v. signys The ferste is that confessioun mote been schamefast not for to couere ne hyde his synne / for he hath a-gilt his god & defouled his soule. / [985] And herof seyth seynt Augustyn / the herte trauaylyth for schame of his synne & for he hath greet schamefastnesse he is digne to haue greet mercy of god [986] ¶ Swych was the confessioun of the Publican that wolde not heue vp hise eyen to heuene for he hadde offendit god of heuene / for whiche schamefastnesse he hadde a-non the mercy of god / [987] And therof seith



seyne Augustyn that sweche schameful folk been next  
 forȝeuenesse & remyssioun [988] ¶ A nothir sygne is  
 humylite in confessioun of whiche seyth seynt Petyr /  
 Humblith ȝow vndyr the mygh of god / the hond of god  
 is myghty in confessioun / for therebi god forȝeuyth the  
 thynne synys / for he alone hath the power / [989] & this  
 humylite schal been in herte / & in signe outward / for  
 rygh as he hath humylite to god in his herte / rygh so  
 schulde he humble his body outward / to the prest that sittyth  
 in godis place / [990] For which in no maner seth that  
 Crist is Souereyn & the prest meene & Mediatour be-  
 twethe Crist & the synnere. And the synnere is the laste  
 be weye of resoun / [991] thanne schulde not the synnere sitte  
 as heye as the Confessour: but knele <sup>1</sup>by-forn hym or at  
 hise feet / but if maledye disturbe it / for he schal not take  
 kep who sit there: but in whois place that he sittyth.  
 [992] A man that hath trespassed to a lord / & comyth for to  
 axe mercy / & makyn his acord / & sette hym down a-non  
 by the lord / men wolde holde hym outrageous & not  
 worthy so sone to haue remyssioun ne mercy. [993] The  
 thredde signe is how that thynschriftes schulde ben ful of teerys  
 if man may / & ȝif he may not wepyn *with* his bodily eyen.  
 let hym wepe in herte / [994] swich was the confessioun  
 of seynt petir / for aftyr that he hadde forsake ihesu Crist  
 he wente out & wepte ful bittyrly [995] ¶ The ferthe  
 signe is that he ne lette not for schame to schewyn  
 his confessioun [996] Swich was the confessioun of  
 marye Maudelyn that ne sparede for no shame of hem that  
 weryn at the feste for to go to oure lord ihesu Crist & beknowe  
 to hym here synys // [997] ¶ The fifte signe is that a man  
 or a woman be obeysaunt to resceyue the penaunce that  
 hem is enioynynd / ffor certis Ihesu Crist for  
 the giltis of man was obeysaunt to the deth

[998] ¶ The secunde condicyoun of verray confessioun  
 is that it be hastyly don / For certis if a man hadde a  
 dedly wounde. euere the lengere that he taryede to wariche

hym self / the more wolde it corupte & haste hym to  
 his deth / & ek the wounde wolde be the werse to  
 hele. [999] And rygh so faryth synne that long  
 tyme is in a man o-nschewid / [1000] Certis a man oughte  
 hastily schewyn hise synnys for manye causys as for dred  
 of deth that comyth off the sodeynly / & no serteyn what  
 tyme it schal be ne in what plase / And ek the drechyng  
 of on synne drawyth in a-nothir / [1001] & ek the lengere  
 that he taryeth / the ferthere he is from crist / And ȝif he a-byde  
 to his laste day / skarsely may he schryue hym or re-  
 membre hym of hise synnys or repente for the  
 greuous maledye of his deth [1002] And for as meche / as  
 he ne hath not in his lyf herkenyd Ihesu Crist [ . . . .  
 . . . . . no gap in the MS.] at his laste  
 day & skarsely whil he herkenyth hym [1003] And  
 vndyrstonde that this condycioun / muste haue .iiij. <sup>1</sup>thyngis  
 ¶ Thyn schryfte muste been purueyed by-forn & a-vysed /  
 for wekede haste doth no profit / And that a man can  
 schryue hym of hise synnys be it of pryde or of enuye &  
 so forth with the spechis & circumstauncis [1004] & that  
 he haue comprehendit in his mynde the noumbre & the  
 gretnesse of hise synnys / & how longe that he hath leyn  
 in synne / [1005] & ek that he be contrit of hise synnys  
 & in stedefast purpos with the grace of god neuere eft to  
 falle in synne. And ek that he dreede & countrewayte  
 hym self that he fle the occasiounys of synne / to wheche he  
 is enchynyd / [1006] Also thow schalt schryue the of alle  
 synnys to on man / & not a parcel to oo man / &  
 a parcel to a nothir man ¶ That is to vndyrstonde / en entent  
 to departen thyn confessioun / as for schame or dred for it  
 is but strangelynge of thyn soule / [1007] For certis ihesu  
 crist is entyrelly al good / in hym nys non imperfeccioun And  
 therefore othir he forȝeuyth al parfitly or neuere a  
 del. [1008] I sey not if thow be assygnit to the  
 pentauncer for certeyn synne / that thow art bounde to  
 schewyn hym alle the remenaunt of thyne synnys / of wheche

thow hast be schreuyne of to thyn curat but if it lyke to the /  
 of thyn humylite / this is no departynge of schrifte  
 [1009] ¶ Ne I seye not there is a spice of dyuysioun of confes-  
 sioun / that if thow haue lycence for to schryue the to a dis-  
 creet & to an onest prest / wheere the lykyth & by lycence  
 of thyn curat that thow ne mayst wel schryue the to hym  
 of alle thynne synnys / [1010] but lat no blot been by-hyndyn  
 ¶ Lat non synne been on-told as fer as thow hast remem-  
 braunce / [1011] And whan thow schat be schreuyne to thyn  
 curat telle hym ek alle the synnys that thow hast doon  
 syn thow were last Ischreue / this is no wekede entent / of  
 dyuysioun of schrifte

[1012] Also the verray schrifte axeth certeyn con-  
 dyciounnys / fyrst that thow schryue te by thyn fre wil.  
 noght constreynyd / ne for schame of folk / ne for maledye  
 ne sweche thyngis / for it is resoun that he that trespasith  
 by his fre wil: that by his <sup>1</sup>fre wil confesse his  
 synne / [1013] & that noon othir man telle his synne  
 but hym self / ne he ne schal not nayte ne denye his synne /  
 ne wrathe hym agay[n] the prest/ for his amonestynge  
 to leue synne [1014] ¶ The secunde condicioun is that thyn  
 schrifte be be lauweful. that is to seyne that thow schryuyt  
 the & ek the prest/ that heryth thyn confessioun / been  
 verrayly in the feith of holy cherche / [1015] & that a  
 man ne be not despeyred / of the mercy of Ihu Cryst / As  
 caym or iudas / [1016] And ek a man mote acuse  
 hym selue of his owene trespase / & not a-nothir but he  
 schal blame & wyte hym self / & his owene malyce / of his  
 synne / & noon othir. [1017] but natheles / if that  
 a-nothir man be occasioun / or entysynge of his synne or the  
 estat of a persone / be swich thour his synne / that it is  
 aggreggit or ellis that he may not pleyndly schryue hym  
 but he telle the persone with whiche he hath synnyd /  
 thanne may he telle [1018] so that his entente be not  
 to bakbyte the persone / but only to declare his con-  
 fessioun

[1019] ¶ Thow ne schalt not ek / make none lesyngis / in  
 thyn confessioun for humilite paraenture to seyn  
 that thow hast doon synnys of whiche thow were  
 neuere gilty in [1020] for seynt augustyn seyth / if that  
 thow be cause of thyn humilite makyst lesyngis  
 on thyn self / thow ne were not in synne be-forn /  
 3it art thow thanne in synne thour thyn speche [1021]  
 ¶ Thow muste ek schewe thyn synne by thyn owene propere  
 mouth but thow be wexe doumb. & nat by no  
 lettere / for thow that hast don the synne: thow schalt haue  
 the schame therfore [1022] ¶ Thow schalt nat ek  
 peyntyn tyn confessioun / by fayre subtile wordis / to couere  
 the more thyn synne / ffor thanne begilyst thow thyn self / &  
 nat the prest/ thow muste telle it platly be it  
 neuere so foul ne so horrible / [1023] Thow schalt ek  
 schryue the to a prest that is discreet to conseyle the / &  
 ek thow schat not schryue thee for veynglorie / ne for  
 ypocrise / ne for non cause but only for the doubte of  
 ihesu Crist / & the heele of thyn soule / [1024] thow  
 schat nat ek renne sodeynly to the prest to telle hym  
 thyn synne lyghtly <sup>1</sup>as ho so tellit a iape or a tale / but  
 aysely & with gret deuocioun [1025] And generally  
 schryue the ofte if thow ofte falle & a-ryse by  
 confescioun / [1026] And thow thow schryue the oftere  
 than onys of synne of whiche thow hast be schryuen it is  
 the moore meryt / And as seyth seynt augustyn / thow  
 schalt haue more lyghtely relesynge & grace of god /  
 bothe of synne & of peyne [1027] And certis onys a  
 3eer at the leste weye it is laueful for to been houseled / for  
 certys onys a 3er alle thynges renouelyn

[1028] ¶ Now haue I told of verray confessioun  
 that is the secunde party of penytence.



## Tercia pars penitencie est Satisfaccio

[1029]

**T**He thredde partye of penytence is Satisfaccioun / & that stant most generally in almesse & in bodyly peyne. [1030] ¶ Now be there thre manere of alle manere of almesse / contricioun of herte Where a man offeryth hym self / to god / a-nothir is to haue pete / of defaute of hise neigheboris / And the thredde is / in ȝeuyng of good conseyll gostely & bodily where men haue nede & namely sustenaunce of mannys fode. [1031] And take that a man haue nede of these thyngis generally. he hath nede of fode / he hath nede of clothyng. and herberwe he hath nede of charitable conseyll. & visityng in prisoun / & in maladie / & sepulture of his dede bodi [1032] And if thow mayst not visite the nedeful with thyn persone visite hym bi thyn message & thynne ȝiftys [1033] these been general almessis or werkis of charyte of hem that hath temperel richessis or discrecioun in conseylyng ¶ Of these werkis schalt thow here at the day of dome /

[1034] These almessis schalt thow don of thynne owene propere thyngis and hastyly & priuily if thow mayst [1035] [. . . . no gap in the MS.] nat don it pryuyly thow schat not forbere it to don allnesse thow men seen it so that it be nat don for thank of the world / but for the thank only of ihesu Crist. [1036] For as witnessith seynt Matthev .c°. 5°. A cete may not been hid that is set on a greet mounteyn / ne men lyghte not a lanterne & putte it vnder a buschel / but men sette it vp on a candel stikke to ȝeun lyght to the men in the hous / [1037] Right so schal ȝoure lygh lightyn by-fore men that th[e]y may seen ȝoure goode werkys & gloryfye ȝoure fadyr that is in heuene

[1038] Now as to spekyn of bodyly peyne it stant in preyeris in wakyngis in fastyngis / in vertyuous



techyngis of orisounnys [1039] ¶ And ye schal vndyrstonde that orisounnys or preyeris is for to seyne a pitous wil of herte that redresseth it in good / And expresseth it by wil outward to romounnyn harmys & to haue thyngis espirituel & durable & sumtyme temporel thyngis / Of whiche orisounnys / certis in the orisoun of the paternoster / hath ihesu crist enclosed / most thyngis. [1040] Certis it is pryuyleged / of thre thynges in his dignetee. for whych it is more digne / than any othir preyere for that ihesu Crist hym self makede it [1041] & it is schort for it schulde be coud the moore lyghtely & for to with-holde it the more esyly in herte & helpyn hym self the moore oftere with the orysoun / [1042] & for a man schulde been the lasse werye to seyn it / & for a man may not excuse hym to lerne it / it is so schort & so esy / & for it comprehendyth in it self alle goode preyeris / [1043] The expocicioun of this holy preyere that is so excellent & digne: I be-take to these maystris of Theologie / saue thus meche wele I seyn that whan thou preyest that god schulde for-geuyn the thyne giltys as thou for-geuyst hem that agyltyn to the / be ful weel war that thou ne be nat out of charyte / [1044] This holy orisoun amenuseth ek venyal synne / & therefore it apartenyth specially to penytence <sup>[1] 'ordinatly—god;' repeated in MS.]</sup>

[1045] ¶ This preyere muste been trewely seyde / & in verray feyth & that men preye to god / <sup>1</sup>ordinatly & discretly & deuoutly & alwey a man schal putte his wil to be subiect to the wil of god <sup>1</sup> / [1046] this orysoun muste ek be seyde / with gret humblesse / & ful pure honestee / & not to the anoyauce of ony man or woman It muste ek be contynued with thyne werkys of charitee [1047] It auaylyth ek a-geyn the vicis / of the soule / For as seyth seynt Ierome by fastynge been sauyd the vi<sup>2</sup>cys of the flesch / & be preyeris the vertu of the soule

[1048] Aftyr this thou schat vndyrstonde that bodyly preyere stant in wakyng / ffor ihesu Crist seith / wakyth & preyeth that 3e ne entre in wekkede

temptacioun / [1049] 3e schulde vndyrstonde also that fastyng  
stant in thre thyngis / in forberyng of bodyly mete  
& drynk / & in forberyng of wordely iolytee / & in for-  
beryng of dedly synne this is to seyne that a man schal  
kepe hym from dedly synne with al his myght /

[1050] Thow schalt vndyrstonde ek that god  
ordeynede fastyngis / And to fastyng partenyth .iiij  
thyngis. [1051] largenesse to poore folk. gladnesse of  
herte espirituel nat to be angry ne a-noyed / ne  
groche for he fastith. And also rosonable our for to  
ete be mesour that is for to seyne / a man schal nat ete in  
on tyme / ne sitte the lengere at his table for he  
fastyth /

[1052] ¶ Thanne schalt thow vndyrstonde that bodyly  
peyne stant in disciplyne or techyng be word / or by  
wrytyng / or in exsaumple / also in weryng of heyrys or  
of stamyn or of habyrgeouns on here nakede flesch for crystis  
sake And sweche manere panauncis. [1053] but ware the  
wel that sweche manere penauncis on thyn flesch ne make  
the nat ouyr angry or a-noyed of thyn self / for betere is  
to caste a-wey thyn heyre / than to caste a-wey thyn sekyr-  
nesse of Ihesu crist [1054] And therfore seyth seynt Poule /  
clothith 3ow as they that been chosyn of god / in herte of  
myserycorde / debonayrete / sufferaunce & swich manere of  
clothyng / of whiche ihesu Crist is more a-payd / than of  
heyrys / or haubergeouns or hauberkys

[1055] ¶ Thanne is disciplyne ek in knokkyng of  
thyn brest / in scorgyng with 3erdys / in knelyngis in  
tribulaciouns / [1056] in sufferyng paciently wrongis that  
been doon to the / & ek in pacient sufferaunce of maledyis  
or lesyng of wordely catel / or of wif or of child / or  
othere frendys

[1057] ¶ Thanne schalt thow vndyrstonde whiche thyngis  
disturben penaunce / & this is in .iiij. manerys / That is  
dreede. schame. hope & wanhope that is desperacioun  
[1058] ¶ And for to speke ferst of drede <sup>1</sup>for wheche he

wenyth that he may suffere no penaunce [1059] There ageyns is remedye for to thynke that bodyly penau[n]ce is but schort & lytil / at regnard of the peyne of helle. that is so crewel & so long that it lastyth with-outyn ende

[1060] ¶ Now a-geyns the schame that a man hath to schryue hym / & namely these ypocritis / that woldyn been holdyn so parfite / that they han non neede to schryue hem [1061] // A-gayns that schame schulde a man thynke / that be weye of resoun that he that hath not been aschamyd / to doon foule thyngis: certis hym oughte not to been aschamyd to doon fayre thyngis / [ . . . . . [1062] . . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] & alle hese werkys to hym may no thyng been hid / ne couered / [1063] Men schulde ek remembre hem / of the schame that is to come at the day of dome / to hem that been nat penytent / & schryuyn in this present lyf / [1064] for alle the creatourys in erthe & in helle / schulyn seen aperly al that they hidyn in this world

[1065] ¶ Now for to speke of hem that been so necligent & slowe to schryue hem / that stant in two manerys / [1066] that on is for that he hopit to leue longe / & for to purche meeche rychesse for his delyt & thanne he wolde schryue hym / And as he seyth hym self thanne tymely I-now / to come to schrifte / [1067] A-nothir is of surquiderye / .i.<sup>1</sup> necligent hope that he hath in *cristis* mercy. [1068] A-gayns the ferste vice / he schal thynke that oure lyf is in no sekyrnesse And ek that alle the rychessis in this world / been in auenture & passyn as a schadewe on the wal. [1069] & as seyth seynt Gregorye that it apertenith to the greete ryght-wisnesse of god that neuere schal the peyne stynte of hem that neuere wolde withdrawe hem / from synne here thankis / but ay contynewe in synne / for thilke [ . . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] perpetual peyne. [<sup>1</sup> .i. = *id est*]

[1070] ¶ Wanhope is in two maneris / the fyrste wanhope is in the mercy of crist / that othyr is / that they

thyneke that they myghte nat longe perseuere in goodnesse // [1071] The ferste wanhope comyth of that he demyth that he hath synnyd so gretly & so ofte & so longe leyn in synne that he schal not been sauyd / [1072] Certis a-geyn that cursede wanhope / schulde he thyneke that the passioun <sup>1</sup> of Ihesu Crist is more strong for to onbynde: than synne is strong for to bynde. [1073] ¶ Ageyns the secunde wanhope / he schal thyneke that as ofte as he fallyth he may ary[s]e a-geyn by penytence & thow he neuere so longe haue leyn in synne / the mercy of Crist is euere more redy to resceyue hym to mercy. [1074] ¶ A-geyns the wanhope that he demyth / that he schulde nat longe perseuere in goodnesse / he schal thyneke that the febilnesse of the deuyl may no thyng don but if men wele suffere hym [1075] And ek he schal han strenthe of the helpe of ihesu crist & of al holy chyrche / & of the protexioun of angelis 3if hym leste // [<sup>2</sup> meryt corrected]

[1076] Thanne schal man vndyrstonde what is the meryt<sup>2</sup> of penaunce / & aftyr the word of ihesu Cryst it is the endeles blysse / of heuene / [1077] there Ioye hat non ende no contrarite of woo / ne greuaunce / there alle harmys been passid of this present lyf / there as is the sekyrnesse from the peyne of helle / there as is the blysfyl company that reioysyn hem euere moo euereyche of otheris Ioye / [1078] there as the body of man that wilhom was foul & derk: is moore cler than is the sunne / there as the body that whylom was sik frel & febele & mortal: is inmortal / & so strong & so hol that there may no man apeyre it / [1079] there as ne is neythyr hungir thrust ne cold but euery soule replenyschid / with the syghte of the parfite knowynge of god [1080] ¶ This blysfyl regne / may men purchase by pouerte espirituel / & the glorie by lounesse / the plente of Ioye with hungir & thurst & the reste: by trauayle / & the lyf be deth & mortificacioun of synne /



# Here takyt the makere of this bok his leue :

[*Leaf 444 is torn out. Prol. to Legende follows.*]

[1081]

**N**<sup>1</sup> Ow prairie I to hem alle that/ herken this/ liteH/ [<sup>1</sup> Harl. MS. 1758. leaf 230, back. Reg. 18 C. ii. also has the Epilogue.]  
tretis/orredeit. that/if ther/be anyethyng/in it.  
þat liketh hem: that ther/ of thei thanken our/  
lord ihesu crist/. of/ whom procedith aH/ witte &  
aH/goodnes/. [1082] And if ther/be anye thyng that displese  
hem: I prairie hem also that/ thei arecte it/ to the defaute of  
myn vnkonnyng/. & not to my witt/ that/ wolde fulfayne haue  
seide better if/ I had had kunnyng/. [1083] ffor our/  
book/ seith. AH/ that/ is/ writen. is/ writen for our/  
doctryne & that is/ myn entente. [1084] ¶ Wherfore I  
besoke you mekeli for the mercy of god that/ ye prairie for  
me that crist haue mercy on me. & for-yeue me my  
giltes/. [1085] & namli of my translacions/ &  
enditynges/ of worldli vanytees/. the <sup>2</sup>whiche I reuoke in my  
retraccions/. [1086] ¶ As/ is/ the book/ of Troilus/. ¶ The  
book also of ffame. ¶ The book/ of/ the .25. ladies/. ¶ The/  
book/ of/ the Duchesse. ¶ The book/ of/ seynt Valentynes/  
daie of the parlement/ of briddes/. ¶ The talis/ of Cauntir-  
burie that/ sownen in to synne. [1087] The book/  
of/ the Lion. & manye anothir/ boke. if/ thei were in my  
remembraunce. And manye a song/. & mony a lecherous/  
laye. that/ crist/ for his/ gret/ mercy foryeue me the synne.  
[1088] ¶ But of the translacion of Boyce de consolacione:  
& other/ bokis/ of/ Legendis/ of seyntes/ & Omelies/  
& moralite & deuocion [1089] þer of/ thanke/ I our/  
lord ihesu crist & his/ blessid modir/ & alle the  
seyntes/ of heuyn [1090] besechyng/ hem that/ thei from  
hens/ forth vn to my lyues/ ende. sende me grace  
be-waile my giltes/. & to studie to sauacion of/  
my soule. And graunt me grace of verye penaunce con-



fession & satisfaccion to don in this/ present/ lif  
 [1091] thorough the benyngne grace of hym that is/ kyng/ of/  
 kynges & preest/ of/ alle preestis/ that bought vs/  
 with þ<sup>e</sup> precious/ blood of/ his/ herte. [1092] so that I may  
 be oon of hem at the/ daye of/ dome that/ schulen be sauýd.  
 Qui cum patre. & *cetera*//


[later hand] [Edwarde Foxe oweythe this booke ex dono  
 patris sui]

¶ Here/ endeth the/ book/ of/ the/ tales/ of Caunter-  
 burye/. Compyled bi Geffroye/ Chaucers/. Of/ whos/  
 soule/ Ihesu crist/ haue/ mercye/. ¶ AmeN quod  
 Cornhülle. : .]

CAMBRIDGE MS. APPENDIX<sup>1</sup>

OF PIECES AND CUTS NOT IN THE CAMBRIDGE MS.

*University Library, Gg. 4. 27.*

- 
- |  | PAGE       |
|--|------------|
| 1. Appendix to Group A: the spurious <i>Tale of Gamelyn</i> , from the Sloane MS. 1685   | ... 1*-26* |
| [  <i>The Reader is askt to put a * to the nos. of these pages.</i> ]   |            |
| 2. The genuine <i>Man-of-Law—Shipman Link</i> , Group B, § 3, p. 167 Six-Text, from the Sloane MS. 1685, British Museum. ("Twould have followd p. 166 above, had it been in the MS., Gg. 4. 27.) | ... 27*    |
| 3. The genuine <i>Nun's-Priest's End-Link</i> , Group B, § 15, p. 301 Six-Text, from MS. Reg. 17 D xv, in the British Museum. ("Twould have followd p. 518 above, had it been in the Cambr. MS.) | ... 29*    |
| 4. Drawings of the 23 <i>Tellers of the 24 Canterbury Tales</i> , copied from the Ellesmere MS., <sup>2</sup> and cut on wood by Mr A. H. Hooper   | ... ..     |

<sup>1</sup> None of the pieces 1, 2, 3, is in the best MSS. of the Ellesmere, or A-type.

<sup>2</sup> The Ellesmere cuts can be arranged either in their order in the Ellesmere MS., or in the *Six-Text* order of the Tales. In the latter they 'll be easier to find. See these two orders on p. 678.

*Six-Text Order of Tales.*

	Group
1. Knight	A
2. Miller	
3. Reeve	
4. Cook	
5. Man of Law	B
6. Shipman	
7. Prioress	
8. Chaucer	
9. Monk	
10. Nun's Priest	C
11. Doctor	
12. Pardoner	D
13. Wife of Bath	
14. Friar	E
15. Sum'ner	
16. Clerk	F
17. Merchant	
18. Squire	G
19. Franklin	
20. Second Nun	H
21. Canon's Yeoman	
22. Manciple	I
23. Parson	

*Ellesmere MS. Order.*

	Group
1. Knight	A
2. Miller	
3. Reeve	
4. Cook	
5. Man of Law	B <sub>1</sub>
6. Wife of Bath	
7. Friar	D
8. Sum'ner	
9. Clerk	E
10. Merchant	
11. Squire	F
12. Franklin	
13. Doctor	C
14. Pardoner	
15. Shipman	B <sub>2</sub>
16. Prioress	
17. Chaucer	
18. Monk	
19. Nun's Priest	G
20. Second Nun	
21. Canon's Yeoman	H
22. Manciple	
23. Parson	I

2.

THE MAN-OF-LAW—SHIPMAN LINK.

here begynneth the prolooge of the Squyere

[Sloane MS 1685, leaf 78]

Oure Oste vpon hys styroppys stode a none  
 And sayd gode men herknyth euereychoñ  
 Thys was a thyrfty tale for the nones  
 Sir parysshe prest quod he for goddes bones 1166  
 Telle vs a tale as was þi forward yore  
 I see wele þat ye lernyd men in lore  
 Can moche gode by goddes dignyte  
 The parson hym answerid benedicite 1170  
 what aylithe þe man so synfully to swere  
 Oure Ost answeryd o Iankyn be ye þere  
 I smylle a lollere In þe wynde quod he  
 howe godemen quod oure Ost herkenyth to me 1174  
 A-bidith for goddys digne passyon  
 ffor we shalle haue a predicacion  
 Thys lollere here wille preche some what  
 Nay by my fader soule þat shaft he not 1178  
 Seyde þe Squyere here shal he not preche  
 He shalle no gospel glosen here nor teche  
 he lyuythe alle in þe grete godhe  
 he wolde sowen som difficulte. 1182  
 Or sprynge Cokkyth in oure elene corne  
 And þerfore oste I warne þe byforn  
 By Ioly body shalle a tale telle  
 And I shalle blenken you so mery a belle 1186  
 That I shalle waken alle þis companye  
 But it shal not be of phylo[so]phye  
 Ne phillyas ne termes queynte of lawe  
 Ther ys but lytelle latyn in my mawe 1190  
 here endithe the prolooge

[The Squire's Tale follows in the Sloane MS.]

## 3.

## THE NUN'S PRIEST'S END-LINK.

[MS Reg. 17 D xv., leaf 284 (paper, ? 1460).]

**S**ir Nonnes prist'. our host' sayde anon  
 I-blessid be thy breche . and every stoon  
**S**This was a mery tale of chauntilier  
 But' be my trowth if' thow were a seculer 4640  
 Thow woldest' bien . a tredefoule aright'  
 For if' thow have corage . as thow hast' myght'  
 The were nede . of hennys as I wene  
 Ya mo than .vij. tymes . seventene 4644  
 Se whiche bawnes . hath this gentil prist'  
 So grete a nekke . and so large a brist'  
 He lokith as a sparhawke . with his Ien  
 Hym nedith nat'. his colours for to dyen 4648  
 With brasil ne with grayne of portyngale  
 Now *sir* faire fal yow . for youre mery tale  
 And after that' he . with ful myrry chiere  
 Sayde vnto another as ye chul here

Here endith  
 the tale of  
 pe none  
 prest/

[MS Reg. 17 D xv extract stops]

["the prolog' of the Maunciple" follows in  
 MS Reg. 17 D xv.]



DRAWINGS OF THE 23 TELLERS

OF THE

# 24 CANTERBURY TALES,

COPIED FROM THE ELLESMERE MS,

AND CUT ON WOOD,

BY

Mr W. H. Hooper.



*In this first issue, 1871, only 14 of the Cuts are given. The other 10 will follow in 1872. When the print of each MS is bound, the cut of each Teller of a Tale can be put at the beginning of his Tale, as in the Ellesmere MS, or by his description in the General Prologue, to contrast the artist's hand with the poet's; or, all the cuts can be put together before or after the Prologue, or at the end of the volume (as not part of the MS), according to the fancy of each Member.*





THE MILLERE.

*Ellesmere MS, leaf 38, back.*





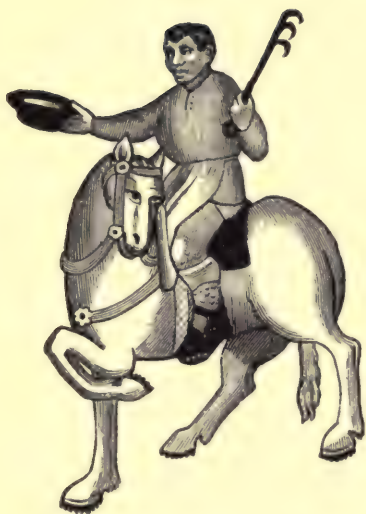


THE KNYGHT.

*Eltenmere MS, leaf 14.*

(The brand on the horse's hip—M, ? for *Miles*—  
is in ink, and probably by a later hand.)





THE COOK.

*Ellesmere MS, leaf 51.*







THE REVE.

*Ellesmere MS, leaf 46.*





THE WIF OF BATHE.

*Ellesmere MS, leaf 76.*





THE MAN OF LAWE.

*Ellesmere MS, leaf 54, back.*

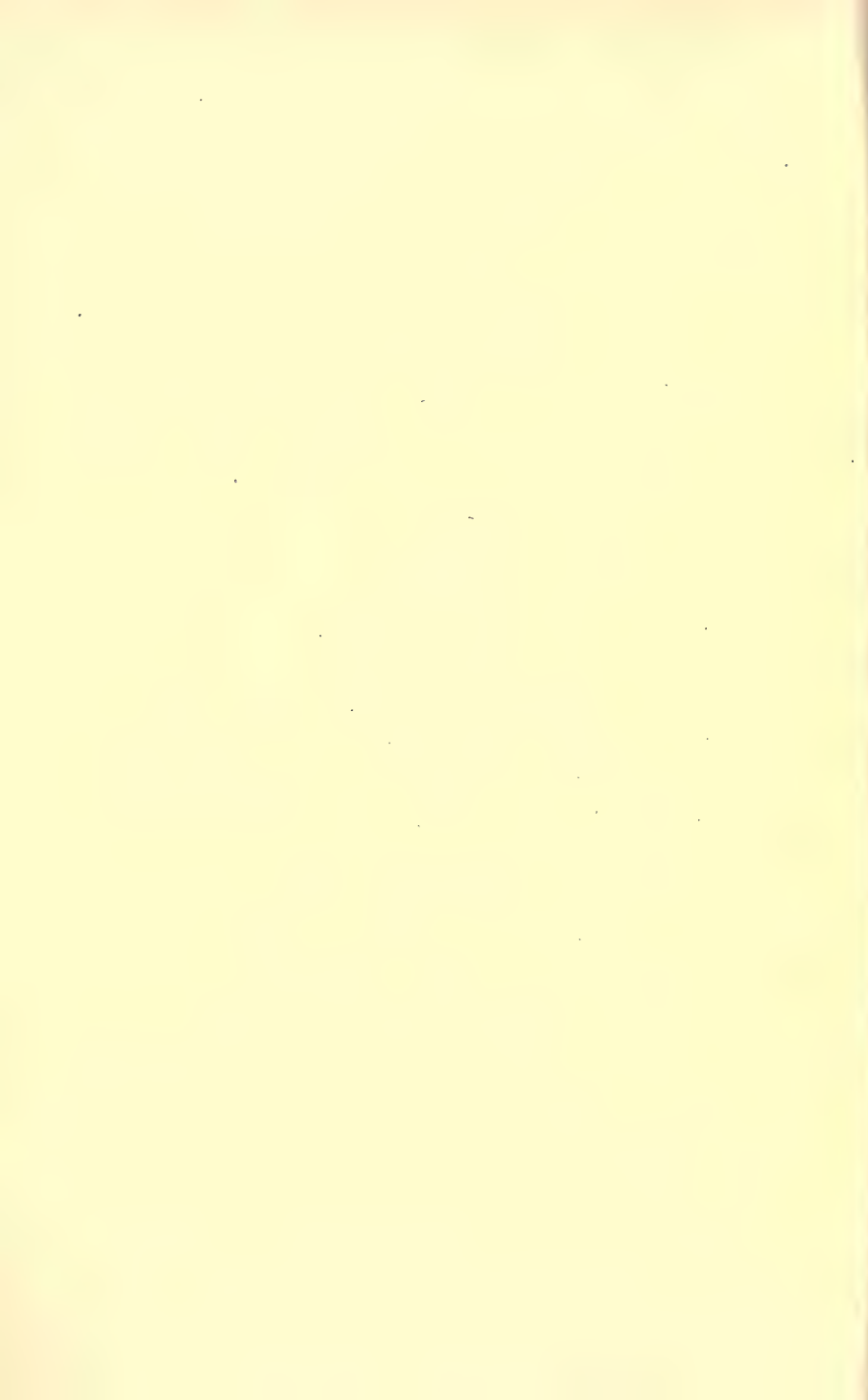






THE FRERE.

*Ellesmere MS, leaf 80, back.*





THE SOMONOUR.

*Ellesmere MS, leaf 85, back.*







THE CLERK OF OXFORD.

*Ellesmere MS, leaf 92.*





THE SHIPMAN.

*Ellesmere MS, leaf 147, back.*





THE PRIORESSE.

*Ellenmere MS, leaf 152, back.*

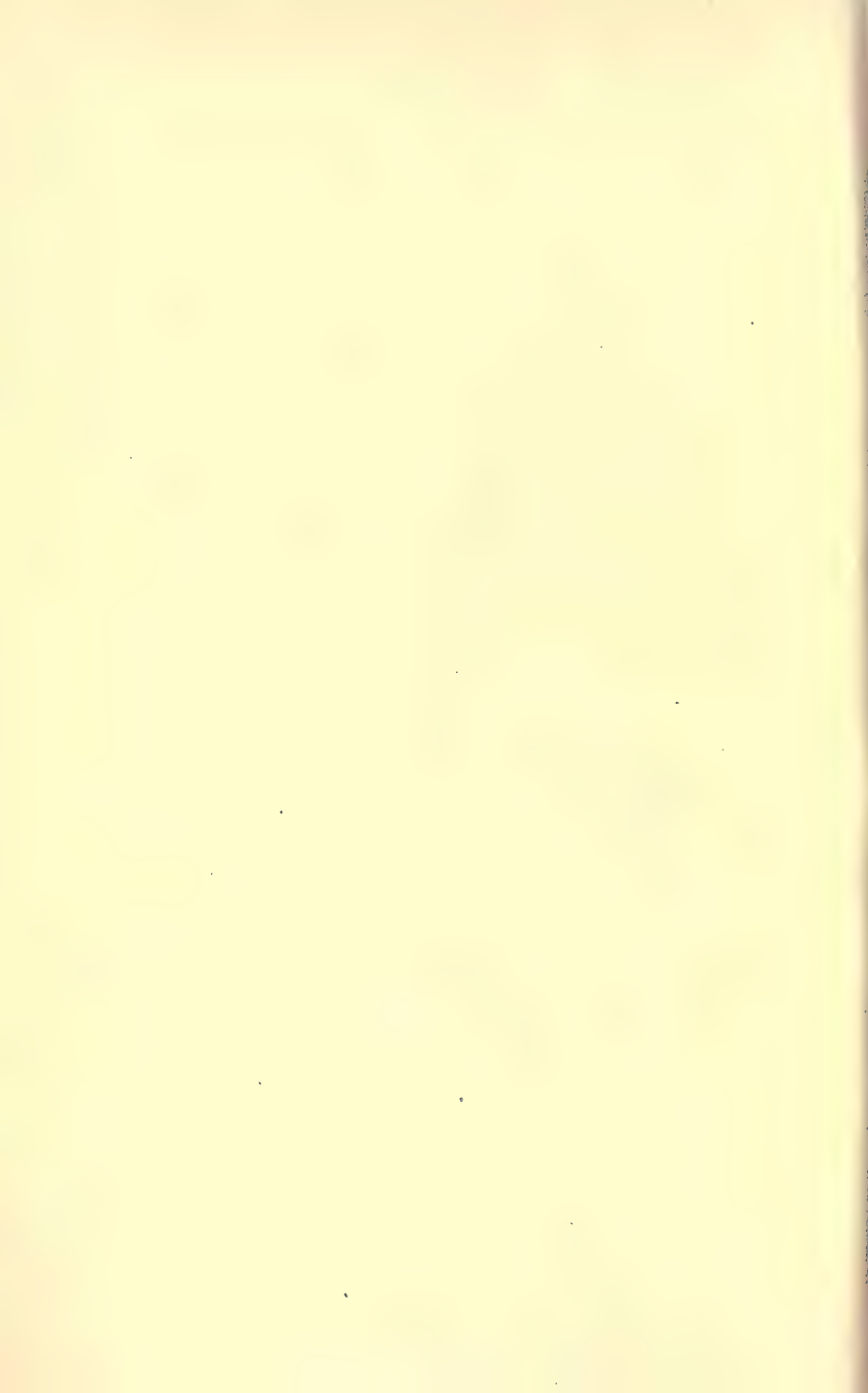


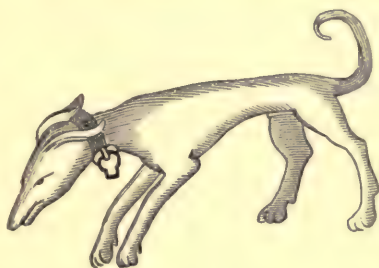




CHAUCER.

*Ellesmere MS, leaf 157, back.*





THE MONK.

*Ellemere MS, leaf 173.*

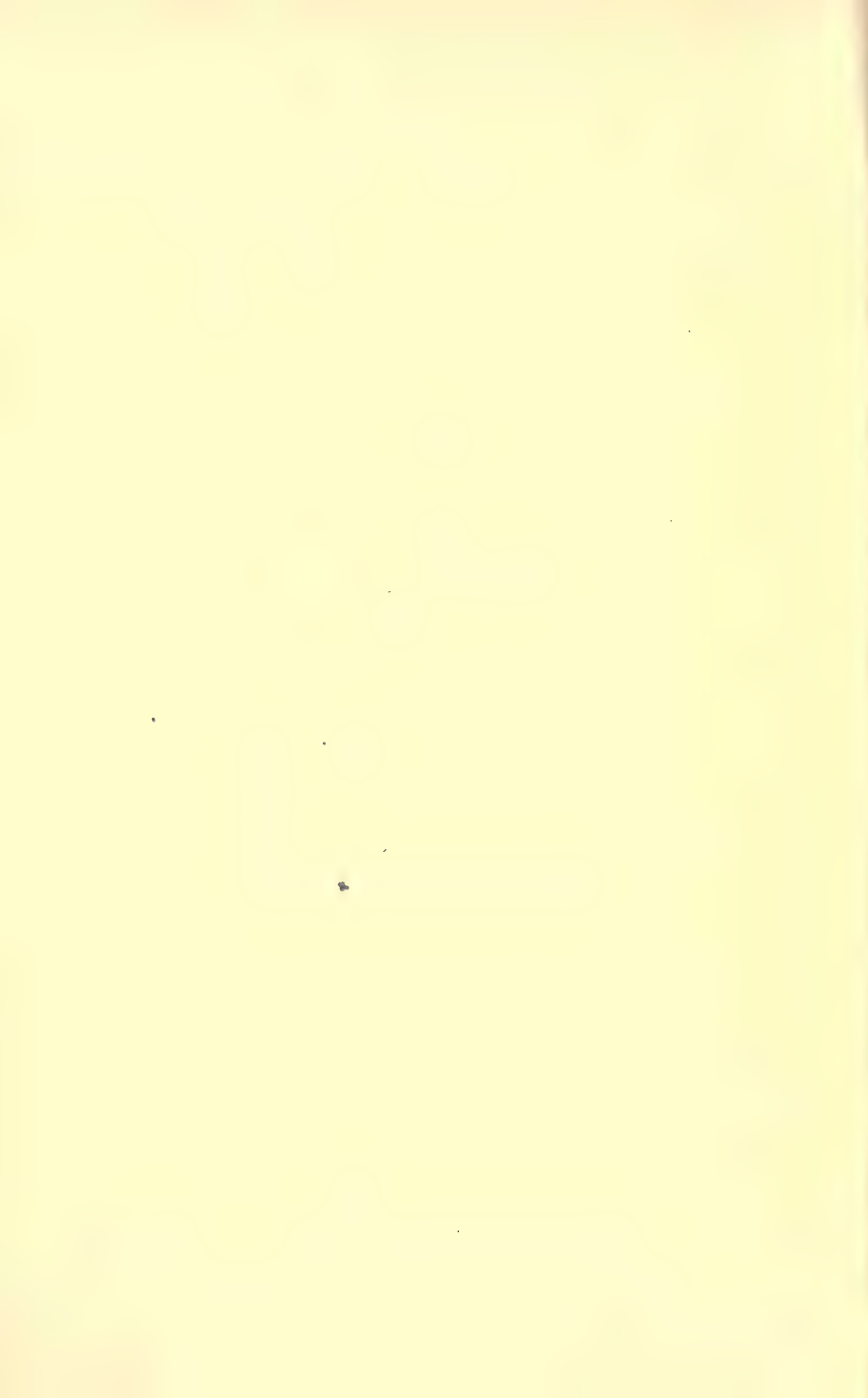






THE NONNES PREEST.

*Ellenmere MS, leaf 183.*





THE MERCHANT.

*Ellesmere MS, leaf 106, back.*





THE SQUIRE.

*Ellesmere MS, leaf 119, back.*







THE FRANKLIN.

*Ellesmere MS, leaf 127, back.*





THE DOCTOR.

*Ellismere MS, leaf 137.*







THE PARDONER.

*Ellesmere MS, leaf 142.*





THE SECOND NUN.

*Ellesmere MS, leaf 191.*





THE CANON'S YEOMAN.

*Ellesmere MS, leaf 198.*







THE MANCIPLE.

*Ellesmere MS, leaf 207.*





THE PARSON.

*Ellesmere MS, leaf 210, back.*

[These coloured figures in the Ellesmere MS have evidently been drawn by two different persons. The little pieces of ground on which the later hand places his figures, mark those done by him.]

His drawing is not so good as the first hand's; and his colours are badly ground, and of poor quality.—W. H. HOOPER.]





DRAWINGS OF  
6 TELLERS OF 6 CANTERBURY TALES  
AND 6 ALLEGORICAL FIGURES  
FOR THE *PARSON'S TALE*

(BEING ALL THAT WERE NOT CUT OUT OF THE MS. BY SOME SCOUNDREL).

COPIED FROM MS. Gg. 4. 27, IN THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, CAMBR.

AND CUT ON WOOD BY

MR W. H. HOOPER.

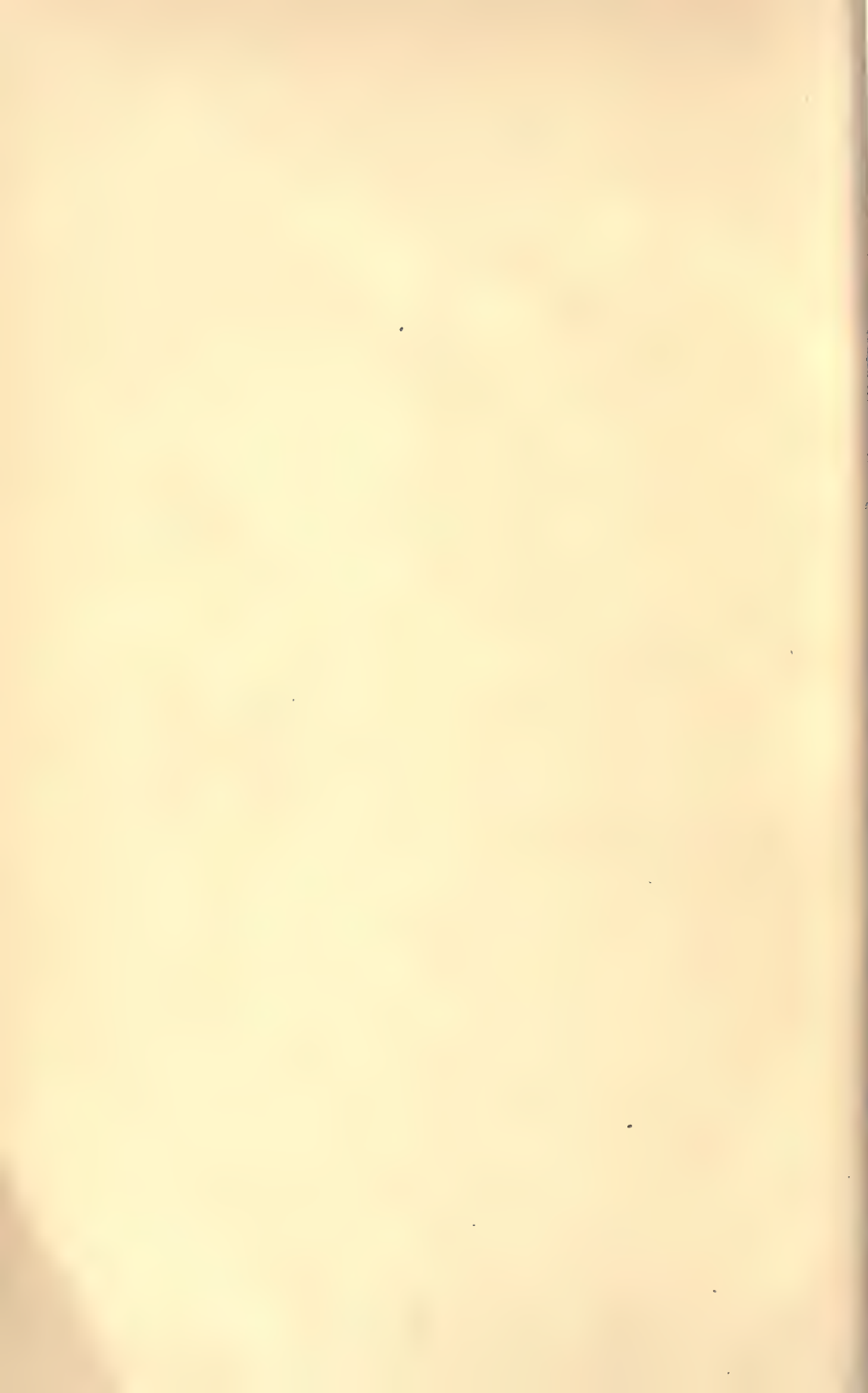
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1. REEVE. 2. COOK. 3. WIFE OF BATH. 4. PARDONER.  
5. MONK. 6. MANCIPLE.

*ALLEGORICAL FIGURES.*

7, 8. ENVY AND CHARITY. 9, 10. GLUTTONY AND ABSTINENCE.  
11, 12. LECHERY AND CHASTITY.

---





THE REEVE.

*MS. Gg. 4. 27, Univ. Libr. Camb., leaf 196.*





THE COOK OF LONDON  
(with a raw on his Horse's ribs).

*MS. Gg. 4. 27, Univ. Libr. Cambr., leaf 192, back.*







THE WIFE OF BATH.

*MS. Ga. 4. 27, Univ. Libr. Cambr., leaf 222.*





THE PARDONER  
(with a Jawbone instead of a Sheep's Shoulderbone)

*MS. Gp. 4. 27, Univ. Libr. Cambr., leaf 306.*







THE MONK  
(without his Bells and Hounds).

*MS. Gp. 4. 27, Univ. Libr. Cambr., leaf 332.*





THE MANCIPLE.

*MS Gg. 4. 27, Univ. Libr. Camb., leaf 395.*





ENVY

(on his Wolf gnawing a Bone).



CHARITY

(with her wingd and flaming Heart).

*Parson's Tale.*

MS. Gg. 4. 27, Univ. Libr. Cambr., leaf 416.







GLUTTONY AND ABSTINENCE. *Parson's Tale.*

*MS. Gg. 4. 27. Univ. Libr. Cambr., leaf 432.*





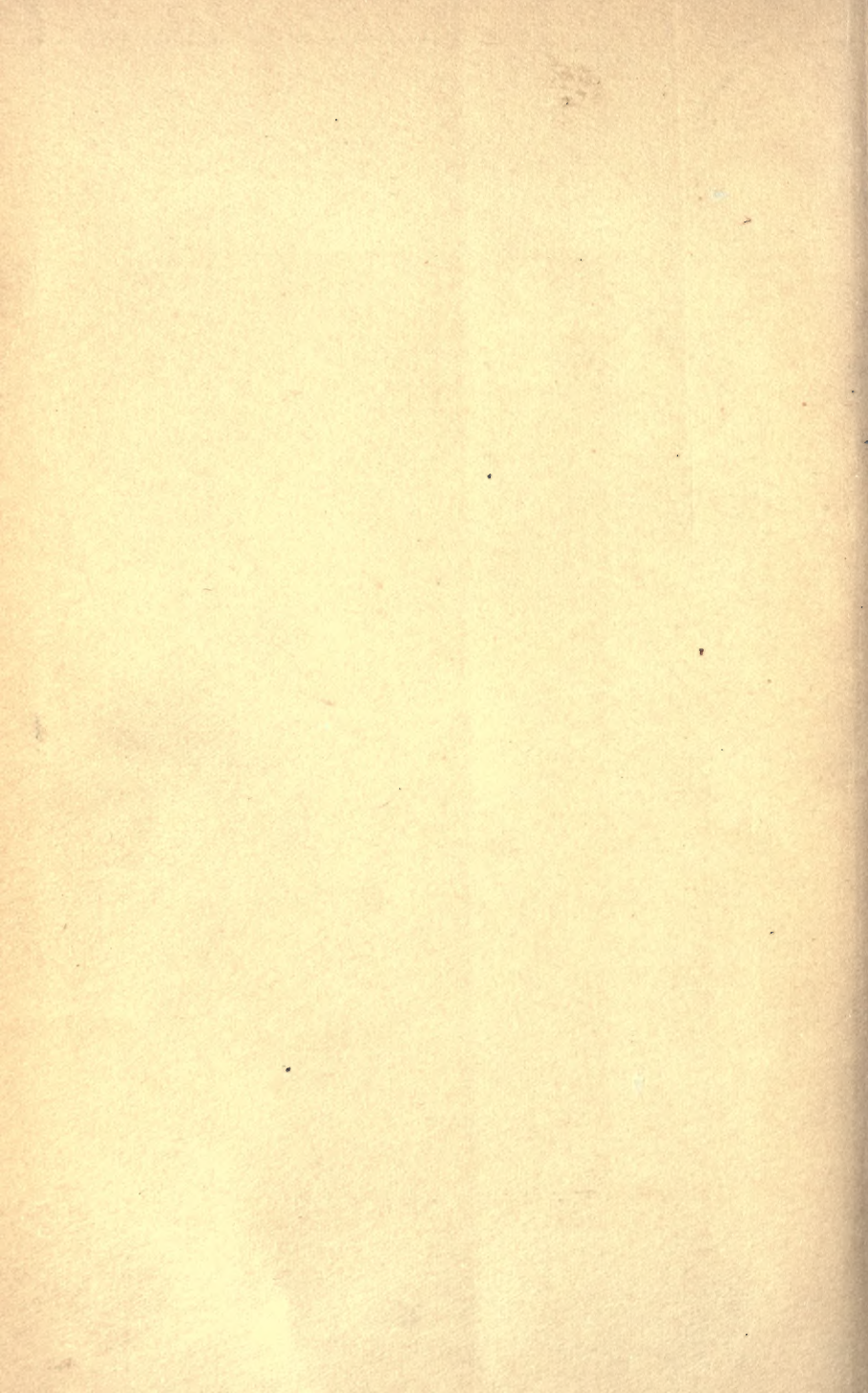
LECHERY (with her Goat and Sparrow), and CHASTITY (trampling on the Dragon of Lust). *Parson's Tale.*

*MS. Gp. 4. 27, Univ. Libr. Cambr., leaf 43.*









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